Place Branding in Strategic Spatial Planning

An Analysis at the Regional Scale with Special Reference to Northern Portugal

Eduardo Oliveira

Place branding in strategic spatial planning

An analysis at the regional scale with special reference to Northern Portugal

PhD thesis

to obtain the degree of PhD at the
University of Groningen
on the authority of the
Rector Magnificus Prof. E. Sterken
and in accordance with
the decision by the College of Deans.

This thesis will be defended in public on

Thursday 31 March 2016 at 16.15 hours

by

Eduardo Henrique da Silva Oliveira
Born on 14 August 1982
in Póvoa de Lanhoso, Portugal

Supervisor
Prof. G. de Roo

Co-supervisor
Prof. G.J. Ashworth

Assessement committee
Prof. G.J. Hospers
Prof. F.M.D. Vanclay
Prof. A. Deffner

Funding information

Cover explanation

Own design. The cover and back cover photo was taken by Arezou Oliveira on 25 September 2015. The photo shows a part of the 18th century tile-work that decorate the entrance-walls of the Episcopal Palace of Braga, located in the Palace Square (Largo do Paço), Braga, northern Portugal. The "azulejo" or tile-work is an identitary art of Portugal. This building is, at present, the rectory of the University of Minho. This particular part of the tile-panel represents scenes of knowledge exchange, debate of ideas and the construction of visions of the future. In my personal perspective, this tile-work is a source of inspiration and motivation to never stop dreaming, thinking, questioning and wondering. To always envision better futures for ourselves, those around us and the world we live in.

ISBN

This Ph.D. thesis is dedicated to:

My breathtakingly intelligent and supportive wife, Arezou Oliveira. Arezou left her family in Iran to pursue her dreams, to follow her heart and passion and build a new family by my side. I am endlessly grateful for her love, her dedication, her effort and her patience, both during this Ph.D. programme and beyond. I feel humble and blessed to have her in my life: to have her smile filling my days with sunshine, to have her words fuelling my thoughts with inspiration, to have her love in every single minute, to listen her voice touching my heart and my mind with perseverance, values, knowledge, dedication and enthusiasm.

My mother, whose personality, character and the spirit she embraces daily to fight for better futures continue to inspire me, affecting my willingness and ability to understand and transform the world with firmness, generosity and grace.

My father, whose long career and professional dedication inspired my daily efforts for success, kindness and mutual support. His daily perseverance, dedication, endless energy and the search for perfection, positively impact my thoughts and actions.

My sister, whose critical thinking and energy in pursuit of new challenges has influenced me as a nuclear fusion, a nano-eruption of motivation to face the complexity and uncertainty that have always characterized the evolution of the Oliveira family. Her dedication to always fight for the respect of personal values, professional integrity, better labour conditions and living philosophies keep feeding my thoughts with alternative, and often radical, ideas and actions.

My gratitude and appreciation.

Eduardo

Acknowledgements have been included in the end of this Ph.D. thesis (page 237).

Preface

This Ph.D. thesis brings together the strategic spatial planning approach and place branding, specifically at the regional scale. It critically explores the actual or potential roles of place branding as an instrument for the attainment of strategic spatial planning goals. This discussion is gaining particular momentum at a time when the application of branding techniques and principles to places, such as cities and regions, has been firmly positioned on the agendas of local and regional governments. Place managers and policy-makers have been embracing place branding as a panacea for a bewildering assortment of deep-seated economic and social ailments, as well as a critical component to assist regional development strategies. However, and in spite of theoretical and empirical advancements, the debate on place branding often lacks any intellectual grounding or even positioning within wider spatial planning strategies, and is ripe for a rethinking in terms of its origins, theoretical underpinnings, conceptual development and practical applications.

Strategic spatial planning, which has been gaining in popularity in Europe, particularly at the regional level, was conceived as a means of overcoming the temporal and often spatial limitations and rigidities of traditional/statutory planning, by confronting the contemporary social, spatial and economic needs of a place and envisioning shared, realistic and desirable better futures for places and their citizens. Strategic spatial planning focuses on a limited number of strategic key issues and focuses on place-specific qualities and assets (whether tangible or intangible). In addition, strategic spatial planning involves relevant place actors and the specific activities of citizens, politicians and spatial planners. Proactive civic participation in a collective strategy and vision for a place (for instance, a region) may generate trust and legitimize spatial interventions, as participants in the process are likely to find that some visions present a future that certain individuals would like to inhabit; to work, study and play in; visit and develop leisure activities in, while other possible futures are considered highly undesirable. In this regard, place branding may be used in support of such visionary realignments and structural change; to foster economic restructuring, social inclusion and cohesion, political engagement and civic participation; as well as the reinforcement of place identification and the general well-being of citizens and communities.

The theoretical assumption postulated in this thesis is that place branding could and perhaps should be integrated into strategic spatial planning, independent of the geographical scale of application and whether the place branding initiatives are novel or a re-branding exercise. This thesis investigates the empirical significance of a regional branding strategy for northern Portugal (NUTS II), integrated into wider strategic spatial planning, and its ability to overcome the entrenched regional, economic and social difficulties and imbalances. To achieve this aim, a qualitative methodology was employed. Specifically, a content analysis of strategic spatial plans, development plans, strategic initiatives and online tourist-/traveller-generated content for Portugal and its northern region. In addition, 16 regional actors with a stake (and expertise) in the region were interviewed. By drawing the attention of scholars, practitioners and policy-makers towards place branding as a strategic spatial planning instrument, this thesis aims to contribute to theoretical underpinnings of place branding in order to make it effective, efficient, socially and environmentally responsible and more grounded in theory.

Voices of northern Portugal

Voices of northern Portugal, aims to bring together various perspectives over the northern region of Portugal ("O Norte") from those that currently live there or have been there developing work, studies, visiting or for any other purpose. The collection of opinions was started on the 15th of March 2015 and finished on the 1st of July 2015. It was conducted through social media, specifically my own personal account on Facebook and an account administrated by me in the same social media platform called "The Northern Portugal". My own twitter account was also used for this purpose. I have requested to my contacts and followers to write in one or two sentences (or 140 characters if shared via Twitter) their perspectives, thoughts, and feelings about northern Portugal. Their words were not analysed neither do they contribute to the findings discussed on the chapters that composed part B of this Ph.D. thesis. They do represent, despite that they are not any representative sample, an effective mode of involving and engaging with citizens, communities and a multiplicity of actors. As I widely argue throughout this thesis, the opinions of place actors and citizens must be taken at the heart of any place branding strategy, independently of the scale of application, as well as in strategic spatial planning processes. Place actors and citizens can act as co-creators of place brands (see chapter 4 of this thesis). Their involvement is also relevant in strategic spatial planning as they can co-produce process (see chapters 5 and 6 of this thesis). The portfolio of opinions is presented below.

"Northern Portugal is the most beautiful and true region of Portugal, with hospitable and friendly people."
(Nuno Oliveira, March 2015)

"Galicia and Northern Portugal, the corner where the Atlantic meets Europe."
(António Alves, March 2015)

"Northern Portugal is simply lovely, for its stunning landscape and welcoming people."
(Thiago Brito, March 2015)

"Northern Portugal is the region where we can find the authentic Portugal. Is the region where we can hear people speaking loudly, see clothing drying at the balconies, neighbours requesting sugar to the next door neighbour, the bakery owner that knows our name. For me, these is what best represents northern Portugal, and for me these is our Portugal."
(Andreia Amorim, March 2015)

"Northern Portugal a land of white wine and filled with traditions"
(Márcia Sousa, March 2015)

"Northern Portugal, a region with history, traditions and astonishing landscapes."
(Miguel Correia, March 2015)

"Northern Portugal, the region where the people are hospitable and cheerful."
(Sylvia Santos, March 2015)

"To speak about northern Portugal, it is necessary to fill the chest of a green and fresh pride, straighten your back and lift the chin. And, look ahead to the infinity with the confidence that in each northerner gesture focuses there is tradition and the purest beauty of our country."
(Olga Pereira, March 2015)

"Northern Portugal, where the "green sounds" of nature, mix with a determined touch of peoples' northerner accent."
(Mário Coelho, March 2015)

"Northern Portugal represents the joy of the colours of its hills; the joy of their sounds and the cheerful smells. Those who lived or visited northern Portugal probably will never forget it; they will leave with the desire of returning someday."
(Silvia Fernandes, March 2015)

Northern Portuguese people are daily fighters in toil of wild land.
Northern Portugal is tough and strong with expressive people and landscapes which impact positively all those that interact with the region.
Is a tracery of natural and human landscapes that amazes in each corner.
Is a watching point, because in the wilderness of each hill one is able to observe all its charm.
(Sérgio Ferreira, April 2015)

Table of Contents

PART A: THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

Chapter 1: Introduction

Chapter 2: Conceptualising place branding in strategic spatial planning

PART B: EMPIRICAL RESEARCH - PLACE BRANDING IN STRATEGIC SPATIAL PLANNING WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO NORTHERN PORTUGAL

Chapter 3: Place branding in strategic spatial planning: a content analysis of development plans, strategic initiatives and policy documents for Portugal and its northern region (NUTS II) for the period between 2014 and 2020

Chapter 4: Content, context and co-creation: a content analysis of tourism-oriented online publications in which the tourism potential of Portugal and its northern region (NUTS II) has been discussed

Chapter 5: Theoretical framework of the study - place branding as strategic spatial planning instrument and its application to the case study based on regional actors perspective over a regional branding strategy for northern Portugal (NUTS II)

Chapter 6: Tourism as key strategic domain: the regional actors perspective over the tourism potential of northern Portugal (NUTS II) and its relevance for a regional branding strategy

Chapter 7: Place branding in strategic spatial planning: cross-border cooperation in a regional branding strategy with reference to Northern Portugal and Galicia

PART C: CONCLUSIONS

Chapter 8: Conclusions and future challenges

This thesis has been proofread in UK Standard English (except for quotations written in American English) following the Oxford Student's Dictionary and reflects modern academic trends. For instance, words have been spelled with an "ize", "izing" or "ization" suffix and some words, such as "analyse", are spelled in the traditional way. The word "chapter", when is not used at the beginning of a sentence, has not been capitalized. "%" appears as "per cent" when in a sentence. "Co-production" has been spelled as "co-production". However, the reader will also find "coproduction" but only when is part of a quotation.

List of figures and tables following the sequence of their appearance in each chapter

List of acronyms in English and Portuguese organized in alphabetical order

Acronym	English translation	Original name in Portuguese
ADRAVE	Regional Development Agency of the Ave Valley	Agência de Desenvolvimento Regional do Vale do Ave, S.A.
ATP	Textile and Clothing Association of Portugal	Associação Têxtil e Vestuário de Portugal
AICEP	AICEP Portugal Global - Trade & Investment Agency	Agência para o Investimento e Comércio Externo de Portugal
CCDRN	North Regional Coordination and Development Commission	Comissão de Coordenação e Desenvolvimento Regional do Norte
DMO	Destination Marketing Organization	
EGTC	European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation	Agrupamento Europeu de Cooperação Territorial
EU	European Union	União Europeia
ESDP	European Spatial Development Perspective	
eWOM	Electronic Word of Mouth	
FCT	The Foundation for Science and Technology	Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia
GDP	Gross domestic product	Produto Interno Bruto
GNP	Galicia-northern Portugal also as Galicia north-Portugal	Galicia-Norte de Portugal
HCP	Health Cluster Portugal	Pólo de Competitividade da Saúde
ICT or ICTs	Information Communication Technologies	Tecnologias de Informação e Comunicação
IN	Regional actors and organizations interviewed	Atores regionais e organizações entrevistadas
INE	Statistics Portugal	Instituto Nacional de Estatística
IPM	The Institute of Place Management	

ITPD	Institute of Tourism Planning and Development	Instituto de Turismo
NUTS	Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics	Nomenclatura das Unidades Territoriais para Fins Estatísticos
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development	Organização para a Cooperação e Desenvolvimento Económico
PB	Place Branding	
PSP	Portuguese Society of Propaganda	Sociedade de Propaganda de Portugal
SPP	Strategic Spatial Planning	Planeamento Territorial Estratégico
TPNP	Regional Entity of Tourism of Porto and Northern Portugal	Entidade Regional do Turismo do Porto e do Norte de Portugal
TTCI	Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index	
UM	University of Minho	Universidade do Minho
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization	
UNWTO	United Nations World Tourism Organization	
WTTC	World Travel and Tourism Council	

PART A:
THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1. Problem statement and strands of reasoning

The debate on place branding is gaining particular momentum at a time when the growing literature on the topic proves that the application of branding practices to cities, countries and (to a lesser extent) regions, is an "increasingly appealing topic for academic research" (Ashworth *et al.*, 2015, p. 1). Furthermore, place branding has also become a well-known practice among place managers and governments (Boisen *et al.*, 2011; Kavaratzis *et al.*, 2015; Moilanen, 2015) who have been engaging with marketing and branding strategies in order to position and give visibility to their respective places - thereby attracting residents, tourists, businesses, investments and sporting and cultural events (Zenker and Jacobsen, 2015). The fact that place branding is both an appealing academic topic and a popular practice also has to do with the increase in online information/knowledge-sharing platforms, such as blogs, Facebook pages and Twitter feeds devoting attention to the topic (see appendix A, page 238 for an extensive, but not exclusive, list of those platforms). This phenomenon is in addition to the establishment of networks for place branding and marketing institutes, such as The Institute for Place Management, based in Manchester, UK, The European Place Marketing Institute, based in Warsaw, Poland, and The Nordic Place Academy, operating from Stockholm, Sweden, the recently established International Place Branding Association, among others. These entities have organized several academic and non-academic conferences on the topic of place branding, place marketing and place management, as well as publishing insightful reports shedding light on the application of branding principles to places (see, for example, Best Place Institute/European Place Marketing Institute, 2015) or discussing the contribution of the high street and street markets to the economic, social and political health of cities (see, for example, Hallsworth *et al.*, 2015).

Situated at the forefront of the contemporary debate on place branding, this thesis sets out to investigate the phenomenon of place branding – that is, places making use of branding techniques and principles - and its theoretical linkage with strategic spatial planning, conceived as a means of overcoming the temporal and often spatial limitations and rigidities of traditional/statutory planning. Specifically, the thesis scrutinizes the role of place branding within a strategic approach to spatial planning, with special reference to a peripheral European region — that of northern Portugal (Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics II, henceforth referred to as NUTS II). Before I define the aims of this thesis, it is important to clarify the two possible strands of reasoning for the above-mentioned approach and justify why I have developed further the primary line of reasoning.

In this thesis, I seek to explore critically the actual or potential roles of place branding as an instrument for the attainment of strategic spatial planning goals - that is the primary strand of reasoning debated theoretically in chapter 2 and explored empirically in chapters 3 to 7. An alternative strand of reasoning is also debated in chapter 2 as a counterpoint to the primary strand (Figure 1.1.). This alternative strand of reasoning takes place branding to be dominant over strategic spatial planning, while the line of reasoning that guided this research takes place branding within strategic spatial planning specifically to be an instrument (primary strand of reasoning/the optimal approach). Simply put, the primary strand of reasoning integrates place branding within wider spatial-planning strategies, and is developed in a close dialectic between place-branding goals and the

integrative and strategic approach towards spatial development that strategic spatial planning promotes (the two strands of reasoning are explained intensively in chapter 2).
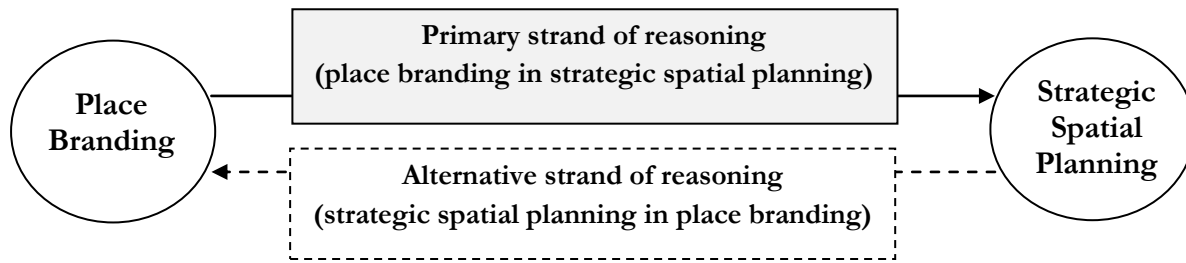
Figure 1.1. The two possible strands/directions of reasoning considered in this Ph.D. thesis. *Source*: own elaboration.

Considering the primary strand of reasoning, this thesis aims to address two main problems:

(1) First, it aims to bridge the gap in the place-branding literature by considering it as a strategic spatial planning instrument (Figure 1.2.). This is in line with Ashworth *et al.* (2015), who argue that place branding has witnessed some misgivings, misalignments and unbridgeable gaps in its theoretical progression and disciplinary maturation, and that it "is ripe for a rethinking in terms of its roots, theoretical underpinnings, practical application and expected outcomes" (2015, p. 2). One of those theoretical gaps is identified in Ashworth (2011a). Ashworth (2011a) claims that place branding "lacks at present any intellectual grounding or even positioning within place planning and policy making" (2011a, p. 702). Van Assche and Lo (2011) reinforce Ashworth's (2011a) argument and state convincingly that "much terrain is yet to be uncovered by scientists in the investigation of the existing and potential linkages between spatial planning and place branding" (2011, p. 124). In addition, the theoretical assumption postulated in this thesis - that is, place branding operating as a strategic spatial planning instrument - provides a contribution to the theoretical advancement and disciplinary refinement of place branding, thus responding to the call of Ashworth *et al.* (2015).
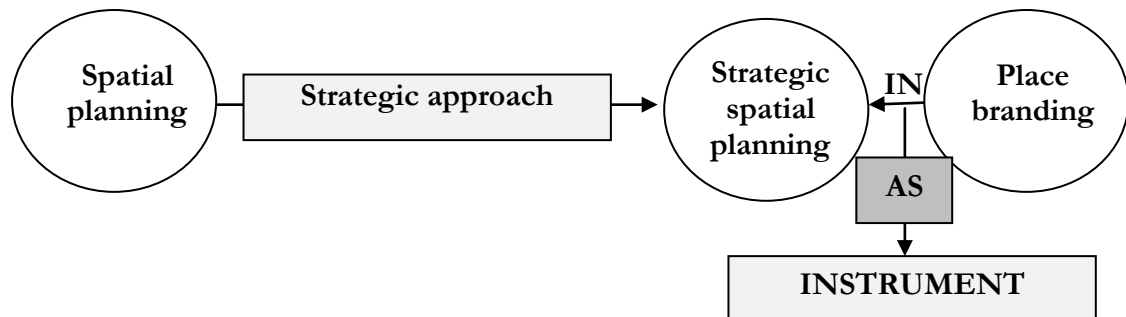
Figure 1.2. Layout of the approach taken in this Ph.D. thesis. *Source*: own elaboration.

(2) Secondly, it aims to contribute to the academic debate on regional branding by discussing its relevance and effectiveness in supporting economic and socio-spatial realignment through the shaping of clearly envisioned shared futures, and supporting structural change in that direction. This is in line with Ikuta *et al.* (2007), who touched upon the significant lack of attention paid to regional branding, and also with Zenker and Jacobsen (2015), who underline that "region branding has received relatively little research attention" (2015, p. 2) when compared to nation and city branding. For instance, in an analysis of 111 place-branding studies, Chan and Marafa (2013) identified about one third of the papers debating place branding on the urban and regional scales and two-thirds of them debating place branding on the national scale. In another study, Hanna and Rowley (2008) found that more than half of the cases in the literature related to the national scale, while a third focused on the city scale. Only 8 per cent of the articles studied related to the regional scale, with particular emphasis on rural regions. Similarly, Lucarelli and Berg (2011) and Hornskov (2007) have concluded that the academic literature has only seldom been concerned with regional branding. While some scholars argue about the lack of studies on regional branding, others highlight the reasons why regional branding is relevant. For instance, Andersson (2014) underlines that place branding has become a critical component of regional development strategies (Andersson, 2014). Pasquinelli and Teräs (2013), however, suggest that place-branding researchers must devote more attention to regions that struggle in building a reputation and gaining visibility. Recently, Zenker and Jacobsen (2015) have attempted to respond to the calls that Pasquinelli and Teräs (2013) and Andersson (2014) have made to further develop regional branding. In an edited book chapter (in *Inter-regional Place Branding: Best Practices, Challenges and Solutions*), a group of researchers, including myself, debate inter-regional branding and cross-border place branding by providing examples of numerous cases and best practices from Europe to Canada, from single-case regions to cross-border Euroregions. From my perspective, a possible explanation for this lack of attention paid to the regional scale could be supported by the fact that some regions have official governmental bodies and are institutionalized, while others are not politically accountable or have no regional governments, making it difficult to coordinate efforts towards a unique regional brand. This thesis directly addresses the need to develop place branding independently of the geographical scale of application, and integrating it within wider spatial-planning strategies with a specific focus on the challenges of branding regions (Figure 1.3.).
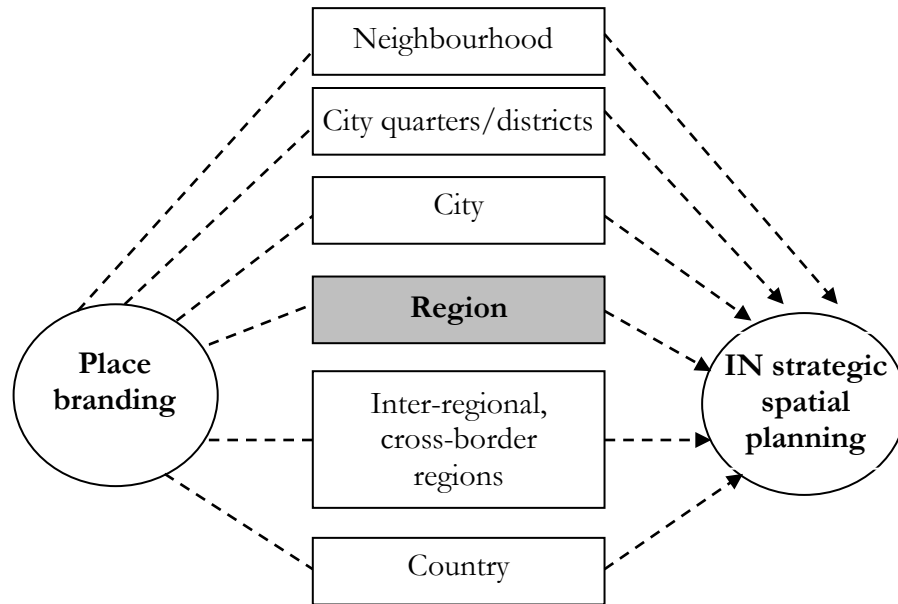
Figure 1.3. Branding neighbourhoods, city quarters, districts, cities, regions, cross-border regions and countries in strategic spatial planning. *Source*: own elaboration.

This thesis provides empirical evidence by paying particular attention to the region of northern Portugal ('Norte de Portugal' in Portuguese). The challenges of branding a region facing myriad economic and social deprivations were central from the beginning of this research. The identification of the key regional actors was the preliminary step in the research, besides listing both the current branding efforts at the national and regional levels and the spatial-planning documents in effect. As result of previous studies conducted in the field of place marketing, by taking the Minho sub-region in northern Portugal as a case study (see Oliveira, 2011), tourism was taken to be a relevant sector in the economy of the country and the region, as well as benefitting from the cooperation of the Spanish Autonomous Community of Galicia. Following the preliminary studies and the research proposal submitted to the institution funding this Ph.D. project, two chapters of this thesis focus on the tourism sector and Portugal and its northern region as tourism destinations, and another one (chapter 7) on the relationships between northern Portugal and Galicia (in the context cross-border place-branding).

Despite such place-specific analysis, this thesis aims to contribute to the scholarly and professional debate on place branding and strategic spatial planning instruments beyond Portugal and its northern region. In an attempt to shed light on the interplay between place branding and spatial-planning strategies, this chapter critically reviews theoretical and empirical endeavours linking the two fields, which together comprise the theoretical backbone of this research (Table 1.1.). The aim of this chapter is, in fact, to provide the reader with a solid framework as a starting point, by presenting the line of reasoning on which the following chapters are built. At the same time, it also aims to explain the research objectives, questions and methodology, as well as justifying the choice of case study.

1.2. Theoretical and empirical endeavours linking place branding and spatial planning

A considerable number of place-branding scholars acknowledge that corporate branding has paved the way for a more sophisticated appreciation of place branding (see, for example, Ashworth, 2005; Kavaratzis, 2008; Skinner, 2008; Kavaratzis, 2009; Hankinson, 2010; Kavaratzis and Hatch, 2013). For instance, Boisen *et al.* (2011) claim that much place-branding effort has been concerned with translating traditional methods from marketing and corporate branding to the situations of towns, cities, regions and countries. Van Assche and Lo (2011) strongly state that "place branding might still be indebted to marketing and corporate branding strategies and techniques" (p. 117) while Andersson (2015) claims that "place branding is commonly conceptualized with a focus on big cities, such as London, New York and Singapore, building from concepts and models from mainstream branding theory" (p. 5). In addition, McCann (2009) and van Ham (2008) argue that the dominant perspectives align place-branding practices with corporate branding and business ideas, and little consideration has been given to its spatial connotations and associations. Corporate branding seemed to offer some insights into place branding at around 2005 (see, for example, Kavaratzis and Ashworth, 2005), mostly because both corporations and places produce multiple products. It soon became clear, however, that corporate branding was a blind alley, as places did not react like corporations but were quite different (see, for example, Ashworth and Kavaratzis, 2010).

It is only recently that research on place branding has significantly broadened its scope to include a wide range of other socio-spatial and spatial-economic issues, and is drawing closer to studies of multi-place actors' governance and participatory planning (Van Assche and Lo, 2011). Likewise, Anholt (2007) underlines that appropriate governance processes may lead to increased social and political cohesion in related policies, and may construct a sustainable place-branding strategy. In addition, the branding option has been presented as a response to the competitive-authentic dialectic of places and, specifically, to areas in need of physical revitalization or urban regeneration and which face post-industrial or other forms of structural, socio-economic change (Evans, 2015). Andersson (2015) recently attempted to reconceptualize the idea of place branding through "more spatially aware readings of the geographies of place branding" (p. 37). Andersson (2014, 2015) introduces a geographical/spatial perspective to place branding by advocating that place branding is much more than merely the migration of corporate branding theories and strategies to places.

As a matter of fact, several conceptual frameworks have emerged over the last 25 years to ground empirical research on place branding and contribute to its theoretical underpinnings. However, only a handful of those models have permitted a more geographical/spatial dimension to the idea of branding places, though it was present largely at the city level. However, the conceptualization of place branding as strategic spatial planning instrument was pioneering and emerged in the literature in 2015 (see Oliveira, 2015a, 2015b). Table 1.1. aims to summarize the theoretical and empirical endeavours linking place branding and spatial planning which have contributed to the maturation and conceptual effectiveness of the primary strand of reasoning put forward in this thesis.

Table 1.1. Theoretical and empirical endeavours linking place branding and more geographical/spatial planning approaches between 1988 and 2015.

1988–1999

Ashworth and Voogd (1988, 1990)	Hubbard and Hall (1998)	Kotler *et al.* (1999)
Theoretical approach		
Geographical marketing mix Spatial-functional measures; Organizational measures; Financial measures; Promotional measures.	**Entrepreneurial model of city governance** Large-scale physical redevelopment; Public art and civic statuary; Mega events; Public-private partnerships and cultural regeneration; Advertising and promotion.	**Strategies for place improvement** A place needs a sound design that enhances its attractiveness; Places need to develop and maintain a basic infrastructure to facilitate people's mobility and trading; A place must provide basic services of a quality that meets business and public needs; Places need a range of attractions for their own citizens and visitors.
Empirical evidence or context		
An analysis at the city level. References to the city of Groningen in the Netherlands are provided in Ashworth and Voogd (1988).	Places in the broadest sense.	

2004	
Kavaratzis (2004)	Hospers (2004)
Theoretical approach	
Theoretical framework of city branding	**Spatial cognition and spatial behaviour**
Primary communication **Landscape strategies**: Urban design; Architecture; Public spaces; Public art. **Place's behaviour:** Vision for the city; Quality of services; Events; Financial incentives. **Organizational structure:** Community networks; Public-private partnerships; Citizens' participation. **Infrastructure:** Accessibility; Cultural and tourism facilities; *Secondary communication* Advertising; Public relations; Graphic design; Logo and taglines. *Tertiary communication* Word of mouth, reinforced by the digital landscape or electronic word of mouth.	The images that people hold in their minds about geographical units are formed in a similar way to images about products. However, geographers prefer to label this similarity as "spatial cognition". Spatial cognition informs the literature on regional branding by arguing that a region's image is influenced in a positive manner by the extent to which the region is known in the outside world. Spatial cognition for regional competitiveness demands that regions think about their identity, image and brand, as well as the reputation they desire. In this regard, Hospers (2004) argues that a strategy of place branding could indeed be useful. "Spatial behaviour" is how people decide on a certain geographical location for their investments, to work, live or spend leisure time. Place (region) branding as a strategy of positive image forming as well as improving a place's reputation. In line with Passi (1996), the territorial shape is the degree to which a geographical area is distinct from other areas in spatial terms. The better defined the territorial borders of a region, the more recognizable they are.
Empirical evidence or context	
An analysis at the city level. References to Amsterdam, Budapest and Athens are provided in Kavaratzis (2008).	Several examples from Europe and North America are provided. Deeper focus on the branding process of the cross-border Øresund region.

2005–2008

Deffner and Liouris (2005)	Evans (2006)	Braun (2008)
Theoretical approach		
Place (city) marketing as a significant urban-planning and urban-tourism planning tool.	Place branding as a concept and approach to city development and planning.	City marketing in the context of urban development. City marketing needs to take into account the multiple functions of cities — spatially, socially, economically, politically and administratively. Braun argues that the needs and wants of urban customers are expressed in their spatial behaviour. When a company or a household decides to change location, or when someone decides to visit a certain place, a spatial dimension is involved.
Empirical evidence or context		
Analysis at the city scale.	Analysis at the city scale.	Analysis at the city scale.

2009

Pellenbarg and Meester (2009)	Metaxas (2009)	Pike (2009)
Regional marketing as an element in regional development strategies and in support of reimagining processes at the regional level. Regional marketing combines promotional, spatial and organizational activities, and can be aimed at various groups.	The role and the significance of place marketing as a strategic planning process in the whole process of local development and competitiveness.	Pike argues that brands and the process of branding are geographical because they are entangled in inescapable spatial associations. Spatial associations of brands and branding suggest that their geographical entanglements may be relational and territorial, bounded and unbounded, fluid and fixed, territorializing and deterritorializing.
Empirical evidence or context		
Province of Groningen, in the northern part of the Netherlands.	The case of the Island of Malta as a competitive tourist destination.	Several goods and services brands in association with the country of origin.

2010–2014

Deffner and Metaxas (2006, 2010)	Van Assche and Lo (2011)	Eshuis *et al.*, (2014)
Theoretical approach		
The connection between place marketing and spatial development is an innovative approach to planning. Place marketing and branding cannot substitute for planning but can only complement it.	Planning and branding as allies in the discovery and creation of narratives and assets. Spatial planning can contribute to the discovery and creation of a place identity in a way that produces economic value.	Citizen participation in place-branding processes is possible, and place branding can influence wider urban policies, such as spatial planning and urban restructuring.
Empirical evidence or context		
The context of CultMark (an INTERREG IIIC project) and the elaboration of a Pilot City Marketing Plan for the case of Nea Ionia, Magnesia in Greece and Paphos in Cyprus.	Tuscany in Italy and Minnesota and Missouri in the United States.	Katendrecht (Rotterdam, the Netherlands).

2015

Ashworth *et al.* (2015)	Seisdedos (2015)	Andersson (2015)
Theoretical approach		
Place brands have the potential to be used as an instrument for envisioning an aspirational "imagined future" for a place. Place brands are thought to provide a vision for the place's future and a direction for planning and implementation.	Provides the framework of a land-use strategy that will ensure sustainable socio-economic development at national and regional levels; multiple stages towards the development strategy — Oman Vision 2020; improving the informational basis of spatial planning and developing a data-management strategy to secure good quality information and transparency of decision-making.	Investigates place branding from a geographical perspective by arguing for applying the perspective of territoriality and relationality to place branding. Andersson's thesis demonstrates the complex and continuously interchangeable spatial structures and contexts that create and reproduce the geographies of place branding, and which aim at improving theoretical concepts of the idea of place branding.
Empirical evidence or context		
An analysis at city and regional levels.	Oman National Spatial Strategy (a practitioner-oriented study).	Small and medium-sized cities in Sweden.

Source: own elaboration based on the mentioned references.

1.2.1. Highlights of Table 1.1. for the theoretical and empirical attempts to link place branding and geographical thinking/spatial planning

i) The period between 1988 and 2004

Reading Table 1.1., and highlighting the period between 1988 and 2004, the geographical marketing mix developed by Ashworth and Voogd (1988, 1990) deserves some reflections, here, for its contribution to the theoretical approach deployed in this thesis.

Ashworth and Voogd (1990), first proposed a geographical marketing mix to capture, according to Kavaratzis (2005, p. 336), the "whole entity of the place-products". In their seminal work, the authors argue that a place (city) marketing and branding process is "inseparably linked with spatial policy, and especially with the physical structure plan" (Ashworth and Voogd, 1990, p. 23). Ashworth and Voogd (1988, 1990) provide the example of the 1986 structure plan for the Dutch city of Groningen, the northern Netherlands, as being, at the time, a new approach towards spatial planning. The plan contemplated the possibility of developing short-term actions in which place marketing and branding would emerge in support of the management of the city's spatial structure. In addition, they stated that the promotion of the place image must occur not only within the market-planning process as a whole, but "used in preference to or in combination with other non-market-oriented place management techniques" (Ashworth and Voogd, 1990, p. 122). At the regional scale, the place image of the northern Netherlands region was promoted by public authorities or by private agencies with public responsibilities, "as part of the long-standing regional planning policies" (p. 122). This was an important reflection, one that influenced me to develop chapter 3 of this thesis by focusing on the region of northern Portugal (as well as in chapter 5).

In this philosophical approach to place management developed by Ashworth and Voogd (1990), place branding emerges not as having investment attraction, or an increase of tourism revenues, as the ultimate goal or purpose, but as contributing to achieving the economic and development objectives of spatial planning on the city scale. In addition, Ashworth and Voogd (1990) argue that "measures operating in spatial design features will contribute towards urban images and thus reinforce, or contradict, promotional measures" (1990, p. 31). According to Ashworth and Voogd (1990), the idea of marketing (and branding) places involves not only promotional measures but also spatial-functional, organizational and financial measures that are meant to improve places and facilitate place-management interventions.

The contributions from Ashworth and Voogd (1990) inspired the theoretical model developed by Kavaratzis (2004). Kavaratzis's model (2004) included the components of what he calls "primary communication", deepening the Ashworth and Voogd (1990) rationale of understanding place branding as far more than promotional activities. One can label Kavaratzis's (2004, 2008) approach to city branding as an inclusive/integrative model, one in which place branding includes interventions in the spatial structure and the improvement of spatial qualities of places, as well as the definition of a vision for the place. However, it is interesting to note that in Zenker's (2011) analysis of 18 place-branding studies (2005–2010), architecture, buildings and public spaces were largely absent from the brand elements employed. For instance, the terms "physical", "built environment" and "architecture", identified as being positive assets for a place, are mentioned in only three of

those 18 studies. Kavaratzis (2004) advances, when compared with Ashworth and Voogd (1990), by identifying the definition of a vision for a place as fundamental within the primary step of communicating a place brand. The secondary communication component in Kavaratzis's model "is the formal, intentional communication, that most commonly takes place through well-known marketing practices like indoor and outdoor advertising, public relations, graphic design, the use of logos" (2004, p. 43). Tertiary communication refers to word of mouth strategies, which have been reinforced to a large extent by electronic forms of word of mouth. In this third stage, the opinions and perspectives of citizens, who are among the most important actors in a place-branding strategy, independently of the spatial scale of the application, are taken in deep consideration. Nowadays, and following the development of various communication platforms that facilitate knowledge and information exchange, visitors, travellers and investors are opinion-makers when it comes to places, their assets and their qualities. Their opinions also play an important role in the final outcome of a place-branding process. In chapter 4, I have attempted to consider this issue by focusing on the opinions of traveller bloggers for the reasons that will be further explained.

Although the theoretical frameworks developed by Ashworth and Voogd (1990) and Kavaratzis (2004) have influenced my thinking, the approach taken here underpins such theory by using knowledge from strategic spatial planning literature to focus on key challenges, structural change, the definition of envisioned shared futures and the awareness of how to get there. Place branding is considered here as an instrument for the fulfilment of the defined strategic spatial planning goals. As Table 1.1. shows, I have developed my thinking in terms of other approaches to place branding, following the evolution of the idea of branding places.

ii) The period between 2005 and 2010

In the period between 2005 and 2010, the approach developed by Deffner and Metaxas (2006), subsequently reframed in Deffner and Metaxas (2010), is useful in enhancing the theoretical linkage between place branding and spatial planning.

Deffner and Metaxas (2006) highlight the "connection between place marketing and spatial development as an innovative approach to planning" (p. 6), and contend that in order for places such as cities to be successful, the application of marketing techniques must be interconnected with spatial (urban) planning. The authors build empirical evidence by taking as a case study the Nea Ionia municipality in the prefecture of Magnesia in Greece and the region of Paphos in Cyprus - partners of the CultMark (Cultural Heritage, Local Identity and Place Marketing for Sustainable Development) and supported by INTERREG IIIC project. Findings from this place-specific study reveal the fact that contemporary urban planning in Greece must focus on strategic spatial (urban) planning. On the links between place branding (and place marketing) and spatial planning, they argue that spatial planning "is not sufficient by itself if a city wants to attract businesses and investors, international and/or domestic tourists or new residents, or creating a sense of place and civic pride to its existing residents" (Deffner and Metaxas, 2006, p. 27). In line with Deffner and Metaxas (2006, 2010), place branding (and place marketing) and spatial planning are intertwined concepts. Spatial-planning interventions can contribute substantially to marketing and branding, which need to be strategic as well as to involve urban regeneration, focusing especially on tourism and culture. The

authors argue that place marketing and branding are "strategic processes contributing to urban/regional development and urban/regional competitiveness" (Deffner and Metaxas, 2010, p. 67). The place-specific conclusions drawn from analysis of the Neo Ionia and Paphos cases are presented in Table 1.2.

Table 1.2. A comparison between place-branding processes and spatial planning undertaken in Nea Ionia in Greece and Paphos in Cyprus.

Nea Ionia, Magnesia, Thessaly region, Greece	Paphos, Cyprus
The definition of a vision for the future (envisioning)	
Envisioning a city that is economically robust as well as socially balanced, and that pays due respect to both the natural and the cultural environments.	Paphos focused on the definition of a vision for a cultural and natural heritage area able to attract tourism whilst improving the quality of life of the citizens and communities.
Ability to accomplish the defined vision	
Nea Ionia lags behind in the definition of a strategic planning process, which is the basis of an effective place-marketing plan.	Paphos has followed the strategic planning process and seems to be effective in terms of planning. This effectiveness mirrors Paphos's ability to set up principal objectives, performing situation audit analysis, organizing efficient partnerships between local authorities and businesses and implementing practical methods of information and data collection.
Nea Ionia was less successful in implementing place-promotional initiatives.	The implementation of strategic planning steps puts Paphos in the lead on the implementation of various promotional policies.
Nea Ionia is affected by the Greek national tourism/cultural policy, but to a very small degree in comparison to Paphos.	Paphos follows a national tourism policy and also contributes to the national tourism strategic process.
Nea Ionia has faced more difficulties in articulating its vision in terms of the national strategies.	Paphos has engaged with local authorities and decision makers, thus strengthening its local communities and their capacities.
Main empirical remarks	
The absence of strategic spatial planning and the presence of a weak link with the national strategy create difficulties for Neo Ionia in designing a stronger place brand, specifically for tourism and cultural purposes (the defined vision).	Paphos became competitive as a tourist destination through the development of strategic actions and the use of branding, making it successful in shaping the defined vision. Strategic spatial planning, for Paphos, has contributed to the success of its branding.

The definition of a vision and its consequent integration within wider spatial planning strategies contribute to the effectiveness of place-branding initiatives. Strong strategic spatial planning is the basis of effective and successful place-branding initiatives.

Source: own elaboration based on Deffner and Metaxas (2006, 2010).

Despite the relevant contributions of Deffner and Liouris (2005), Evans (2006), Braun (2008), Pellenbarg and Meester (2009), Metaxas (2009) and Pike (2009) to the debate on the branding and brand management of city and regional brands, I have highlighted work by Deffner and Metaxas (2006, 2010) as their rationale has contributed to shaping my thoughts in the early stages of this research. Specifically, their findings contribute to enhancing the theoretical relevance of the primary strand of reasoning developed further in this thesis. The key remark of Table 1.2. is that a conceptual and empirical dialectic between place branding and spatial-planning strategies is necessary in order to align regional/civic actors' perspectives with those of public and private organizations. In addition, one can conclude that strong spatial planning is the basis of effective and successful place-branding initiatives. This is close to the arguments debated by Van Assche and Lo (2011), which I explore in detail below and in chapter 2.

iii) The period between 2011 and 2015

From the period between 2011 and 2015, I highlight here the approaches developed by Van Assche and Lo (2011), Eshuis *et al.* (2014), Ashworth *et al.* (2015) and Seisdedos (2015).

Van Assche and Lo (2011) assert that the synergies between place branding and spatial planning "are there, and deserve further exploration" (p. 124). When investigating three regions — Tuscany, Italy; Missouri and northern Minnesota in the US — Van Assche and Lo (2011) noted that a strong place brand allows for strong planning interventions (as in the case of Tuscany). In Tuscany, the synergies between place branding and spatial planning are seen by regional actors as clear and undeniable. The approach to place branding through planning strategies developed in Tuscany is the result of a process of collective awareness that has promoted distinctiveness and Tuscan qualities. Strong articulation between regional actors, civic action/participation at the local level and the coordination of spatial policies are also key for effective branding and spatial planning that emerge from branding this Italian region (Van Assche and Lo, 2011).

The case of northern Minnesota offers an alternative perspective to the relationship between place branding and spatial planning. The cultural landscape of northern Minnesota was successfully rebranded as a natural landscape. The dialectical relationship between northern Minnesota's image and spatial planning were crucial for the success of this rebranding — translating into protection measures and a more appropriate combination of land use. In addition, the spatial planning strategies implemented by Minnesotan authorities "improved the quality of the actual product that was branded, so it could obtain more followers" (Van Assche and Lo, 2011, p. 123).

A detailed analysis of Van Assche and Lo's (2011) approach is presented in chapter 2. Drawing theoretical conclusions from their work here, Figure 1.4. presents a summary of what I term "the theoretical cycle between place branding and spatial planning". Van Assche and Lo (2011) argue that

the absence of spatial planning in Missouri blocked the design of place branding; thus, a Missourian brand (absent in this case) could not contribute to supporting spatial-planning strategies. For them, spatial planning strategies that respect place narratives and place identities impact place branding positively and, conversely, a place brand would be able to contribute to spatial interventions. Moreover, the structural linkage between "place branding and spatial planning seems necessary, even urgent" if one aims to "avoid the stereo-typing of place-branding as an exclusionary neo-liberal endeavour" (Van Assche and Lo, 2011). For this to happen, the spatial planning strategies must be legitimized via civic participation and the engagement of all place actors.
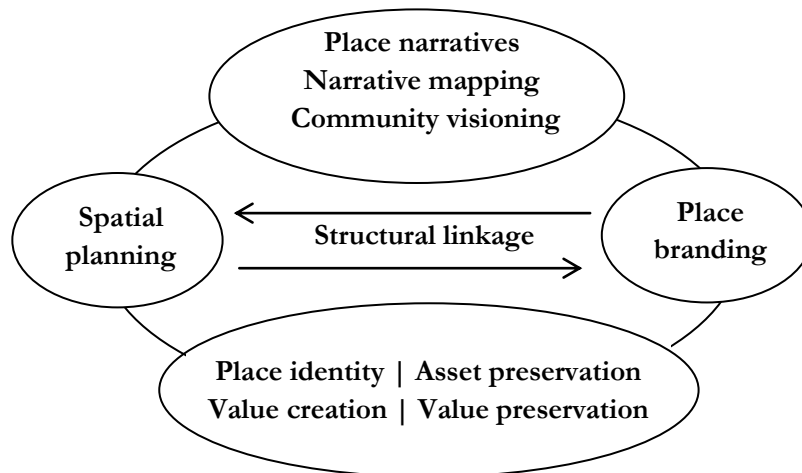
Figure 1.4. Theoretical cycle between place branding, spatial planning, place narratives and place identity.
Source: own elaboration based on Van Assche and Lo (2011).

The participation of citizens and other relevant parties in place-branding processes is discussed in Eshuis *et al.* (2014), who argue "that greater citizen influence in place marketing does have a significant effect on how place marketing affects spatial plans and physical place development"(p. 162). In addition, Eshuis *et al.* (2014) underline that place marketing and branding "involve not only promotion, but also spatial planning and urban design to influence the physical appearance of the place (the product)" (p. 154). An example might be useful here. By taking Katendrecht, a community in the south of Rotterdam as a case study, Eshuis *et al.* (2014) conclude that "citizen participation in branding processes is possible, and that place branding can influence wider urban policies, such as spatial planning and urban restructuring" (2014, p. 166). In addition, they suggest that branding processes are likely to be more effective if developed in an interactive mode. This means integrating citizens' emotions into the place-branding strategy and follow-up campaigns.

Both emotions (according to Eshuis *et al.*, 2014) and place narratives (according to Van Assche and Lo, 2011) play crucial roles in place branding and spatial planning. For instance, Van Assche and Lo (2011) argue that planning and branding are allies in the discovery and creation of narratives and assets, while Eshuis *et al.* (2014) argue that an interesting aspect of the participation of residents in a place-branding process relates to their feelings and emotions. However, Eshuis *et al.* (2014) argue that emotions are difficult to address in more classical interactive forms of policymaking, which have

the tendency to emphasize rational argument and comprehensive planning. Van Assche and Lo (2011) underline that "planning strategies will hinge on the value that is attached in local and regional narratives to an image of place", also that "spatial planning can contribute to the discovery and the creation of a place identity that produces economic value" (p. 123). Following the conclusions presented in Eshuis *et al.* (2014), citizens can have a say in the desired identity and symbolic representation of their community in place brands. One can conclude that as citizens take part in the branding processes, they contribute to envisioning shared/agreed futures for their own place. This is in line with the theoretical considerations presented in Ashworth *et al.* (2015).

It was my aim in the early stages of this research to contribute to the debate on place branding by arguing that place branding is about more than just place competition. I wanted to elaborate the notion that place brands are useful, not only in securing a desired position within the global flows of people (such as visitors, investors, students, entrepreneurs and potential residents), capital and international sporting and cultural events, but also in supporting reimagining processes and structural change. Ashworth *et al.* (2015), in an attempt to provide some answers to the question "why are place brands important and why do places attempt branding in the first place?" (p. 4), provide important reflections in that regard, which I would like to underline here as they contributed to shaping my thoughts and, consequently, the theoretical framework developed further in this thesis. Ashworth *et al.* (2015) did indeed argue that place branding and place brands are important in capturing and maintaining an important position in the international competitive arena for financial, cultural and human resources, and also that "the usefulness of place brands is their potential to be used as an instrument for envisioning an aspirational 'imagined future', (that is, as an ideal scenario for the place's condition)" (p. 4). This is an important argument, which supported the justification of the primary strand of reasoning of this Ph.D. thesis — that of place branding as a strategic spatial planning instrument. Strategic spatial planning usually proceeds from vision-building and strategy-making to a final implementation phase. Envisioning is especially necessary to trigger change and to raise awareness of the need to do things differently (see Albrechts, 2010a, 2010b; Kalliomäki, 2015). European spatial planning has often been characterized as a normative form of envisioning for more economically, socially and environmentally sustainable spatial structures (see, for example, Dühr *et al.*, 2010; Faludi, 2010; Kalliomäki, 2015). Ashworth *et al.* (2015) argue further that place brands provide strategic guidance for place development and that they also "provide a vision for the place's future and a direction for the planning and implementation of various sorts of measures that will help achieve this vision" (p. 4) — this accords well with the idea of envisioning better futures that is postulated in the strategic spatial planning literature (see, for example, Albrechts, 2010a, 2010b).

In a practical-oriented study, Seisdedos (2015) describes the Oman National Spatial Strategy as one of the interventions implemented by public-planning authorities aiming "to address the spatial dimension of challenges that have accumulated over the last decades mainly as a result of the tremendous pace of growth" (2015, p. 90). The Oman National Spatial Strategy embraces the theoretical propositions of strategic spatial planning and integrates a framework of land use to ensure a sustainable socio-economic development at national and regional levels, as well as the improvement of the informational basis of spatial planning and the development of a data-management strategy to secure good quality information and transparency of decision-making. These

interventions will be carried out in line with a place vision: Oman Vision 2020. The Oman case (see Seisdedos, 2015 for details) does not introduce place branding directly but takes the steps of planning and defining strategic goals and a vision as preparation for potential branding exercises, which is in line with the approach put forward in this thesis.

Figure 1.5. summarizes, in chronological order, the main contributions to the links between place branding and spatial planning. From each contribution, a key theory is extracted. For example, from the geographical marketing mix developed in Ashworth and Voogd (1988, 1990), "spatial-functional measures" is the key theory and from Kavaratzis's (2004) city-branding model, "landscape strategies" is the key theory that inspired the approach of this thesis. The shape of the wavy line aims to represent the non-linearity of knowledge and its progress/evolution through time.
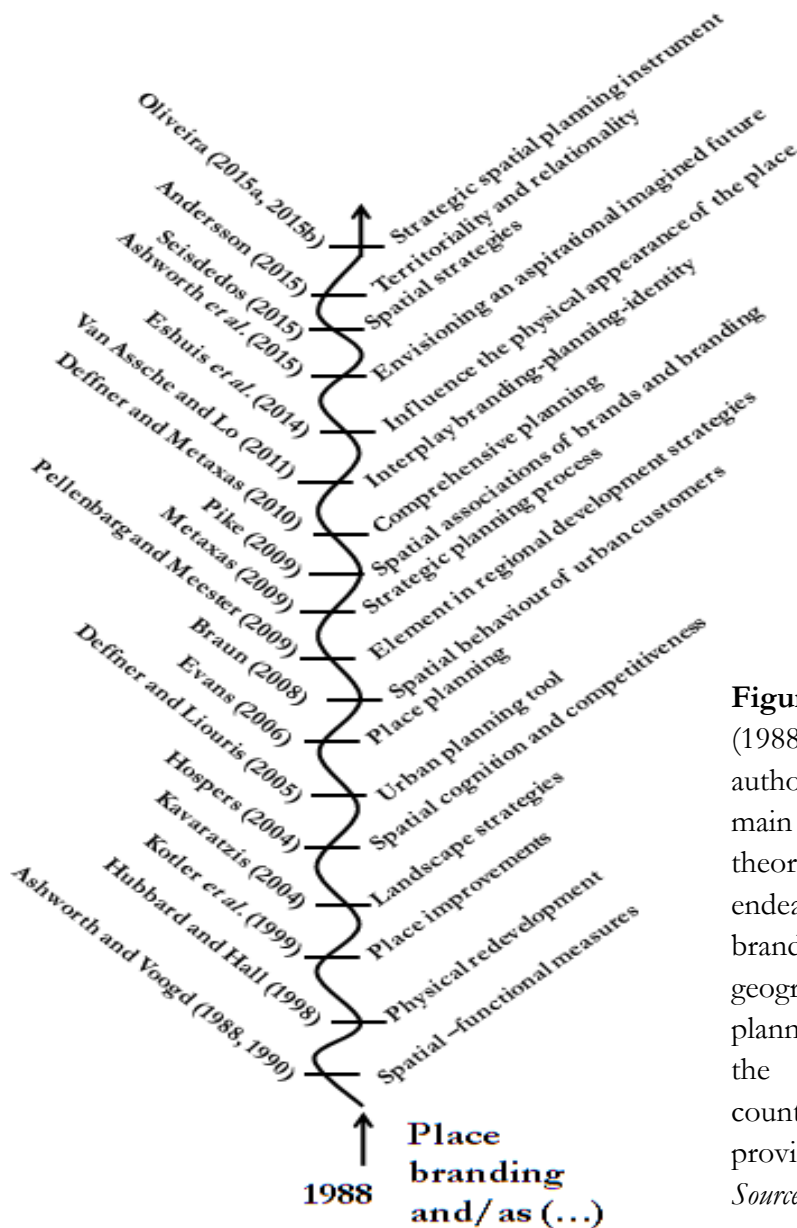
Figure 1.5. Timeframe (1988–2015) by the author, representing the main theories, and theoretical and empirical endeavours, linking place branding and more geographical/spatial planning approaches to the idea of branding countries, regions, provinces and cities. *Source*: own elaboration.

The overall concluding remark is that place branding involves more than place promotion, the creation of a logo or tag line and subsequent advertisement strategies. In addition, it definitely involves more than place competition and the dire need to attract people and "money" to places such as regions. Place branding involves spatial functions; it makes attempts at place improvement, the shaping of identities and complements spatial planning. What is missing from the above-mentioned studies is a deep analysis of the role of place branding as an instrument in strategic spatial planning — which is what this thesis sets out to debate critically. In particular, the theories discussed in Ashworth *et al.* (2015) — of place branding as an instrument to support visionary readjustments; nurture economic reforms; promote social inclusion and cohesion, political engagement and civic participation and strengthen place identification and the general well-being of citizens and communities — are debated in close relation to theoretical propositions from the strategic spatial planning literature. The next section briefly covers the evolution of the strategic spatial planning discourse in Europe.

1.2.2. From traditional land-use planning to a strategic-oriented approach to spatial planning in Europe

Between the 1960s and 1970s, spatial planning evolved in several countries, regions and cities towards a system of comprehensive planning (Albrechts, 2010a). It was also in the 1960s and 1970s that places adopted a more procedural and systematic view of planning, and conceptualized complex systems that could only be understood and monitored through models developed from a spatial science approach (Allmendinger, 2009). In addition, according to Davoudi and Strange (2009), spatial planning in this period was concerned with developing spatial laws and organizing principles around which urban development could be planned.

In the 1980s, when the neo-liberal paradigm was adopted by some governments, thus replacing or complementing the Keynesian-Fordist paradigm, and when public intervention retreated in several domains, a considerable number of Western countries (for example, the UK, the Netherlands, as well as other central European countries) witnessed a retreat from spatial planning. This was fuelled not only by the neo-conservative disdain for planning but also by postmodernist scepticism, both of which tend to view progress as something which, if it happens, cannot be planned (Albrechts, 2010a). In line with this retreat, a more positivist view of spatial planning assumes that the best future follows automatically, if the correct analytical and forecasting techniques are applied rigorously. The same reasoning led modernist planners to believe that the future could be predicted and controlled (Ogilvy, 2002). According to Albrechts (2010a), places, including regions, are "faced by problems and challenges that cannot be tackled and managed adequately with the old intellectual apparatus and mindset" (2010, p. 4). Therefore, spatial planners were requested to think creatively and innovatively about possible ways forward and to prepare responses able to tackle these problems and challenges. This would involve addressing problems to secure better futures, based on shared or agreed futures (Ogilvy, 2002), for communities and all citizens — planning and managing a place where everybody fits in. In response, more strategic approaches, frameworks and perspectives for cities, city-regions, and regions became trendy in Europe by the late 1980s and 1990s (Albrechts, 1999; Albrechts *et al.*, 2001, 2003; Hamnett, 2002; Healey *et al.*, 1999; Pascual and Esteve, 1997; Salet and Faludi, 2000;

Lennon, 2000; Martinelli, 2005). Strategic spatial planning came into force as a mode of promoting new ways of imagining space by breaking with the absolute view of space that characterized spatial planning in the mid-20th century (Davoudi and Strange, 2009; Healey, 2007).

According to Oosterlynck *et al.* (2011) and Albrechts (2010a, 2010b), the traditional land-use regulations, urban maintenance and the delivery and management of public services are not sufficient responses to the challenges that most societies are currently facing. Most societies face major challenges and developments, such as the globalization of cultures and the economy, the ageing of populations, a growing awareness of environmental issues, as well as the technological developments and changes in production processes. These challenges "require the transformation of bureaucratic approaches and the involvement of skills, knowledge and resources that are often external to the traditional administrative apparatus" (Oosterlynck *et al.*, 2011, p. 1). All of these factors call for more strategic approaches to spatial planning (Oosterlynck *et al.*, 2011) and more entrepreneurial styles of planning able to respond to the new demands and cope with challenges (Albrechts, 2010a).

The communicative 'turn' in spatial planning, combined with global and European influences on policymaking, has led to a revival of strategic spatial planning in many EU member states since the late 1980s. This 'turn' to a strategic orientation in spatial planning in Europe (Healey, 2006a, 2006b), is associated with the development and promotion of the idea of "spatial planning" through work on the European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP) and the European Union's encouragement of regional and local economic development policy. For example, in the Netherlands, national spatial planning frameworks emerged in 1960 and underwent progressive developments, albeit with substantive and institutional perspectives that sometimes changed radically in response to social trends and market forces (Salet and Faludi, 2000). The example of spatial planning in the Netherlands might be useful for the rationale of this thesis. Dutch spatial plans provide frameworks for the preparation of planning instruments at the provincial (for instance, the province of Groningen) and local levels. In line with Dutch national spatial plans, the "Nota Ruimte" (see, for example, VROM *et al.*, 2006) is more focused on the economic competitiveness of the Netherlands in an international context in comparison to previous spatial-planning frameworks.

The strategic dimension of spatial planning has expanded to several other countries (Salet and Faludi, 2000; Healey, 1997a). In recent years, spatial planning has become closely affiliated with ambitions to increase spatial competitiveness or improve strategic positioning in a wider European, or even global, context. It also increases the reliance of spatial planning on interaction and communication with a large number of agents and organizations, many of whom lie outside of the spatial-planning sphere. Although the final planning outcomes are the result of deliberation and persuasion, spatial planning remains embedded in a political process that favours particular decisions, directions and actions (Newman, 2008).

In the planning literature, significant attention has been paid to the renewed interest in strategic spatial planning, mainly across Europe, from the beginning of the 1990s (Olesen, 2011). Theoretical developments on strategic spatial planning at the European level have been dominated by spatial planning scholars: namely, Albrechts, Healey and Balducci. According to Olesen (2011), Albrechts and Healey tend to combine empirical research of strategic spatial planning with theorization on how strategic spatial planning could be operationalized in practice. In addition, they and other scholars

have argued for the capacity of strategic spatial planning to provide some answers to a portfolio of questions that statutory spatial planning and traditional modes of planning actions have not yet been able to answer (Sartorio, 2005). Furthermore, Albrechts and Balducci (2013) convincingly argue that there are stages of territorial development when traditional planning instruments are markedly insufficient or even unfit to govern processes of spatial transformation. Strategic spatial planning starts from the position that societies are not prisoners of their pasts and, therefore, carry the responsibility to transform their futures. This means that societies are beholden to find alternatives to proactively shape the unabated pace of change that is driven by structural developments and challenges. Traditional spatial planning is primarily focused on location, intensity, form and harmonization of land development, factors that are required for multiple space-using functions (Albrechts, 2010a). Abis and Garau (2016), in line with Cerreta *et al.* (2010) and Oliveira (2014c), argue that strategic spatial planning gives meaning and purpose to territorial resources and planned territories and combines different visions, knowledge and interpretations of phenomena in order to allow spatial planners and spatial strategists to focus on problems that impact the socio-spatial and spatial-economic conditions of places.

There are several explanations why some cities and regions, scholars and spatial planners have decided to engage and experiment with or reflect upon the processes of strategic spatial planning. One of the reasons has to do with the growing need for cities and regions to reposition themselves in a globally competitive arena in order to address changes in key economic domains, and to cope with the progressive reduction in the availability of central funding and a scarcity of resources. The need to boost a competitive position in the market place, together with the idea supported by Schön (1971), who argues that traditional planning instruments seem to be ineffective because they are designed for situations of stability, have influenced several cities and regions to try out processes of strategic planning (Albrechts and Balducci, 2013). On the one hand, and within the strategic spatial planning processes, Albrechts (2010b) calls for a stronger confrontation with complex dynamics and realities in contemporary spatial planning. In this regard, he requests of spatial planners "ways of thinking and for tools and instruments that help society to cope with change in a dynamic environment" (Albrechts, 2010b, p. 1122), and that they help actualize alternatives. Table 1.3. summarizes the key differences between traditional spatial planning and the strategic approach in spatial planning.

Table 1.3. Key differences between traditional spatial planning and strategic spatial planning.

Traditional spatial planning	Strategic spatial planning
Master plans or land-use plans.	Strategic plans — articulating a more coherent and coordinated long-term spatial logic for land-use regulation.
Technical/legal regulation.	Provides strategic and flexible frameworks for socially and ecologically sustainable development.
Government-led forms of master- and blueprint planning.	Government-led, but a negotiated form of governance.
Land-use control and zoning (functional separation).	Definition of a vision and concrete actions.
Concerned with rational analysis and programming.	A set of concepts, procedures and instruments.
Rational-comprehensive technical analysis.	Tailor-made and context-sensitive (economic, social, cultural, political or power) spatial interventions.
Contingent response to wider forces.	Selective and oriented towards issues that really matter in day-to-day life.
Focuses on integrating objects and functions.	Active force in enabling change.
Relying on a 'Euclidian' concept of space and place and focusing on objects and forms	Dynamic and creative process, targeting discovery and creative synthesis — thus aiming for more relational concepts of space and place, and focusing on relations and processes.
More concerned with the physical structure of a place — physical (statutory) planning	Envisioning as a process by which citizens and a place's key actors develop visions of the future and envision the spaces in which they live — visions must be rooted in an understanding of the basic processes that shape places.
Provides a detailed picture of some desired (or the predicted) end state to be achieved in a certain number of years.	Focuses on what a place ought to be — thinking creatively about possible (and desirable) futures and how to get there.

Source: own elaboration based on Ogilvy (2002), Sartorio (2005), Wiechmann (2007), Albrechts (2006, 2010a, 2010b), Oosterlynck *et al.* (2011), Albrechts and Balducci (2013), Abis and Garau (2016) and Kalliomäki (2015).

A move away from statutory land-use planning/traditional planning and towards "episodes" (Healey, 2004, p. 45) of strategic spatial planning based on new governance modes, is embedded deeply within the processes of rescaling and the re-territorialization of the state (Healey, 2004; Allmendinger and Haughton, 2010). The need to adapt to new scales of social and economic life, as

well as the need to adapt to recent spatio-political and socio-economic dynamics such as globalization, economic competitiveness and sustainable development agendas have led to a widening of the spatial-planning notion, in both scale and scope, with a renewed emphasis on the need for the following — long-term strategic thinking and short-term actions, envisioning processes (the definition of a vision), strategy-making, new identities for places, policy integration and the inclusion of a wide range of stakeholders, civic participation and new skills and resources (Albrechts, 2006; Allmendinger and Haughton, 2010; Healey, 2004, 2007; Cremer-Schulte, 2014). Friedmann (2004) argues that strategic planning is a process, the output of which should be much more than merely a plan document or a vision statement (Friedmann, 2004).

Aiming to capture different aspects of strategic spatial planning that contribute to the theoretical framework discussed in detail in chapters 2 and 5, the following six points summarize the key focal points of strategic spatial planning. Strategic spatial planning focuses on:

i) Place-specific qualities, assets and key regional strategic domains — social, cultural, productive, intellectual and physical

According to Albrechts *et al.* (2003, p. 113), strategic spatial planning "involves the construction of new institutional arenas within structures of government that are themselves changing. The motivations for these new efforts are varied, but the objectives have typically been to articulate a more coherent spatial logic for land use regulation, resource protection, and investments in generation and infrastructure. Strategic frameworks and visions for territorial development, with an emphasis on place qualities and the spatial impacts and integration of investments, complement and provide a context for specific development projects." In line with Healey (2004, p. 61), "Spatial strategies achieve their effects, if they get to have any leverage over future conceptions and actions, over the long term. They do this by influencing agendas of projects and schemes for physical development, and by shaping the values with which the qualities of places are promoted and managed." Albrechts and Balducci (2013, p. 18) argue that "Strategic spatial planning focuses on place-specific qualities and assets (social, cultural, and intellectual, including the physical and social qualities of the urban or regional tissue) in a global context."

ii) Addressing issues that really matter in the day-to-day lives of communities

Albrechts (2004, pp. 751–752) underlines that "Strategic planning is selective and oriented to issues that really matter. As it is impossible to do everything that needs to be done, "strategic" implies that some decisions and actions are considered more important than others and that much of the process lies in making the tough decisions about what is most important for the purpose of producing fair, structural responses to problems, challenges, aspirations, and diversity." Albrechts and Balducci (2013, p. 18) continue, and state convincingly that "Strategic spatial planning focuses on a limited number of strategic key issues; it takes a "collective" critical view of the environment in terms of determining problems and resources." The unspoken question one can detect in the definitions above is: to whom do the decisions and actions matter? To governments exclusively, or to citizens and communities as well? This thesis emphasizes the need to focus on day-to-day issues that matter

to citizens and communities, and which require the attention of governments to address those issues or constraints.

iii) Enabling structural change in an integrative, creative and innovative approach

Spatial planning scholars such as Albrechts and Balducci (2013, p. 19) highlight that "strategic spatial planning, both in the short and the long term, focuses on results and implementation by framing decisions, actions, and projects, and it incorporates monitoring, evaluation, feedback, adjustment, and revision. In this way strategic spatial planning is not just a contingent response to wider forces, but is also an active force in enabling change." Recently, Albrechts (2015, pp. 1–2) has referred to "A growing literature (Albrechts, 2004; Balducci *et al.*, 2011; Healey, 2006a, 2006b, 2007; Motte, 2006) and an increasing number of practices, all over the world, [which] seem to suggest that strategic spatial planning may be looked upon as a possible approach able to cope with the challenges our society is facing and embed structural changes that are needed." Recently, Kalliomäki (2015) has argued that "the actors involved in the planning process should openly acknowledge the limits of arriving at a consensus, and focus more on searching for ways to open the discussion on the state's spatial structure and create a meaningful debate that can mobilize political power to generate structural change" (p. 116).

iv) Involving/engaging with key regional actors, civic society and institutions, and supporting the co-production of just and fair regional planning strategies

Albrechts and Balducci (2013, p. 17), argue that "most traditional spatial planning efforts, the focus is clearly on producing a plan, while public involvement is mainly end-of-the-line. In strategic spatial planning, the plan is just one vehicle among others to produce change. As spatial planning has almost no potential for concretizing strategies, strategic spatial planning involves relevant actors needed for their substantive contributions, their procedural competence and the role they might play in gaining acceptance, getting basic support and providing legitimacy." Furthermore, "strategic planning allows for a broad (multi-level governance) and diverse (public, economic, civic society) involvement during planning, decision-making, and implementation processes. It creates solid, workable, long-term visions or frames of reference and strategies at different levels, taking into account the power structures (political, economic, gender, cultural), uncertainties, and competing values" (Albrechts and Balducci, 2013, p. 19). Cremer-Schulte (2014), emphasize that in contrast to land-use planning that aims at shaping local spatial development, strategic spatial planning aims at shaping the minds of actors who have a stake in spatial development (p. 290). Strategic spatial planning needs imaginative actors to help forge new forms of collective action (Newman, 2008). Recently, Albrechts (2015) has underlined that strategic spatial planning "implies an open dialog in which opinions, conflicts, different values, power relationships are addressed." (p. 107). It aims to provide a dialogue platform through which actors can reflect on who they are and what they want. In this way, they can articulate their identities, traditions and values, and reflect on what spatial quality, equity, accountability and legitimacy mean to them. Participative strategic spatial planning allows actors to "assess together and co-construct spaces of possibilities or impossibilities" (Forester, 2010b, p. 172) or, in other words, the desirable and less desirable futures. With the participation of those

who have a stake in the city or region, futures are imagined that will be sufficiently clear and powerful to arouse and sustain the actions necessary for (at least parts of) such visionary realignments to become a reality (Goodstein *et al.*, 1993). Therefore, a participative envisioning process "includes not only the views of the most articulate or powerful, but also the views of those who have been systematically excluded by structural inequalities of class, gender and religion" (Sandercock, 1998, p. 65). As a learning process (Ostrom, 1990), it also acquires emancipatory potential and legitimacy, as a place-branding strategy becomes integrated into wider strategic spatial planning.

v) Envisioning agreed, hopefully better, and realistic futures in a more hybrid mode of democracy and multilevel governance that is open to diversity, equity, mutual knowledge and values

In line with Kalliomäki (2015, p. 115), "strategic planning is about making (difficult) choices concerning the objectives that are considered the most important for creating a 'better' future, and about acting according to those objectives." Albrechts (2013, p. 55) emphasizes that "envisioning possible futures involves a conscious, purposive, contextual, creative and continuous process of representing values and meanings for the futures. In strategic planning, envisioning provides direction without destination, movement without prediction." Albrechts and Balducci (2013, p. 19) reinforce the point that "strategic spatial planning […] creates solid, workable, long-term visions or frames of reference and strategies at different levels, taking into account the power structures (political, economic, gender, cultural), uncertainties, and competing values". Healey sees the strategic approaches of spatial planning in city regions as "self-conscious collective efforts to re-imagine a city, urban region or wider territory and to translate the result into priorities for area investment, conservation measures, strategic infrastructure investments and principles of land use regulation" (Healey, 2004, p. 46).

vi) Acquiring and strengthening a spatial identity, reinforcing spatial feelings of belonging and attachment

According to Healey (2006b, p. 542), spatial strategy making, "with an appreciation of "relational complexity" demands a capacity to "see", "hear", "feel" and "read" the complex multiple dynamics of a place in a way which can identify just those issues which need collective attention through a focus on" spatial qualities. Albrechts *et al.* (2003, p. 126) assert that "despite the claim often made that the agenda of economic competitiveness and European integration has been driving strategic spatial planning initiatives in Europe", a content analysis of the strategic spatial planning documents for Hanover City Region (1996), Flanders (1997b) and Northern Ireland (2001) show a preoccupation in the "search for ways of strengthening regional identity and cohesion, developing new forms of regional collaboration, and promoting city region profiles internationally". Healey (2006b, p. 542) goes on to underline that "Strategic spatial planning informed by ideas of "relational complexity" is therefore decidedly not "comprehensive" in its approach. It needs to be highly selective, focusing on the distinctive histories and geographies of the relational dynamics of a particular place". It also "needs to be able to mix different forms of knowledge and expertise to

grasp the many ways in which people experience the complex relational dynamics which constitute their existence and identity in places". As place marketing from the 1880s was generally powered primarily by a need for place identity, it predates strategic spatial planning efforts in that regard.

The six key focal points mentioned above have been summarized in a form of six interconnected pieces, with links between each other and to the centre, in Figure 1.6. This framework will be reshaped with insights from the place-branding literature and tested using empirical evidence from the case study.
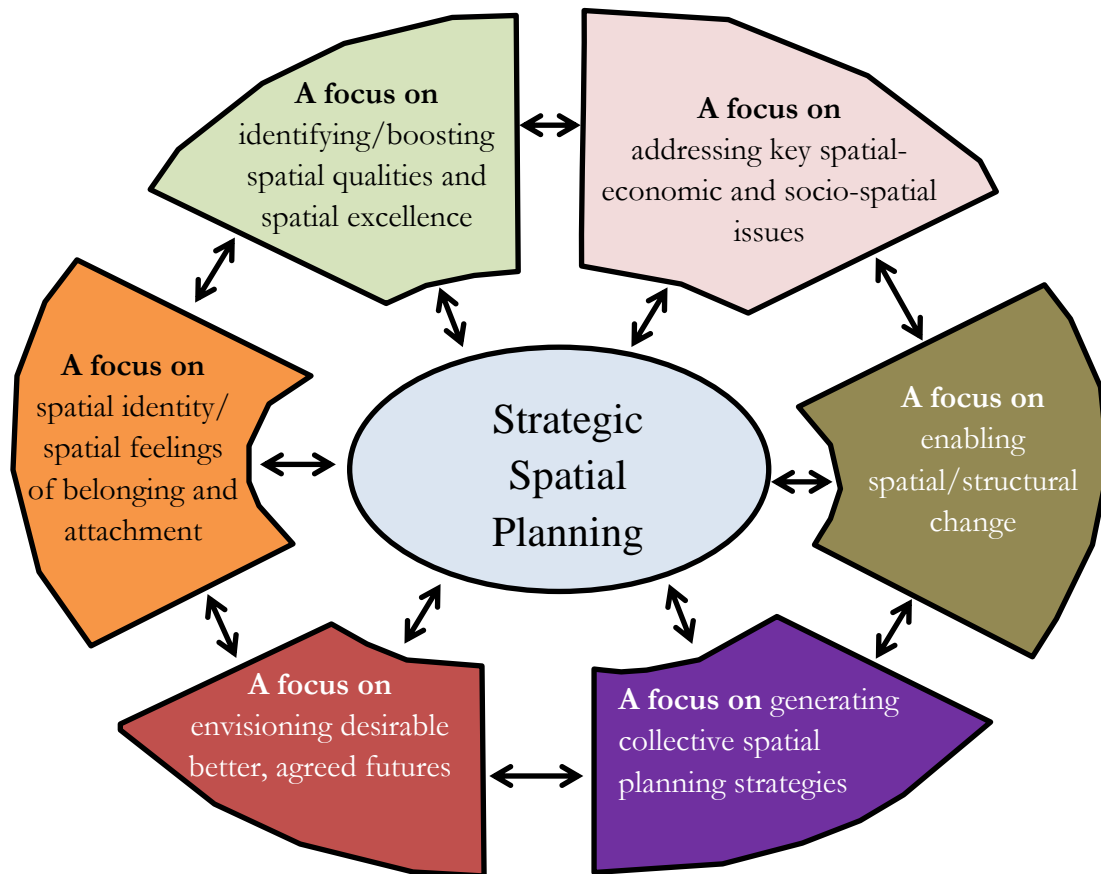
Figure 1.6. The six key focal points of strategic spatial planning.
Source: own elaboration. The format of Figure 1.6. has been inspired by Albrechts *et al.* (2003, p. 124). This model has been developed in chapter 5 - the theoretical framework of the study (Figure 5.1., inspired by Albrechts *et al.*, 2003 and Kavaratzis, 2008). The six key focal points will be aggregated and a new layer will be created in order to contemplate place branding as strategic spatial planning instrument. The colours bring consistency between Figure 1.6, Figure 2.2. (chapter 2) and Figure 5.1.

According to Ashworth *et al.* (2015), a number of unresolved issues pertaining to the theory and practice of place branding remain in the literature. It is the contention of this thesis and the theoretical framework of this study debated in chapter 2 and presented in a more mature construction in chapter 5, to not answer these questions completely but, instead, to contribute

alternative approaches for answering them. The special focus and preoccupation of this thesis is clearly on bringing a more strategic spatial planning approach to the branding process of places. In order to do this, a qualitative research methodology has been employed; further details are presented below.

1.3. Research methodology
1.3.1. Research objectives

This thesis has a main and central objective, which is to contribute to the advancement and maturation of place branding by using it as an instrument within the strategic spatial planning approach. By debating the intertwining relations between place branding and strategic spatial planning, it fulfils one of the prerequisites of illustrating the potential of place branding to assist urban and regional development, as identified by Ashworth *et al.* (2015). In addition, by exploring the theoretical linkage between place branding and strategic spatial planning, it responds to the call made by Albrechts (2010a, 2010b) to address the challenges that societies are facing in a more radical and alternative way, beyond the traditional planning structures, and to accept that the past is no blueprint for how to go forward.

As a geographer and spatial planner, I felt motivated to embrace this theoretical problem by the work of those scholars identified in Figure 1.5. From those key references, Albrechts's (2010b) arguments are most important to the rationale postulated here and to justify the objectives of this thesis. Albrechts (2010b) encourages spatial planners to shift away from rigid, conventional approaches towards a more proactive way in order to bring structural issues onto the political agenda and to give substance to the instruments and transformative practices that are needed to address the challenges. Place branding in strategic spatial planning brings into focus specific contexts, set up priorities, focuses on preserving place qualities and assets and requests the engagement of both civic society and key place actors.

It was with these motivations that I devised the main objective at the beginning of this Ph.D. project in 2012:

> **Main-research objective:**
> To contribute to the advancement and maturation of the place-branding field, by: taking it to be an instrument within the strategic spatial planning approach, thus lending a more strategic approach and geographical/spatial consciousness to the process of place branding; by discussing its relevance and effectiveness in supporting economic and socio-spatial realignment; by contributing to reimagining processes and structural change through civic participation and the shaping of clearly envisioned, agreed, socially responsible and realistic futures, independently of the spatial scale of application (country, neighbourhood, districts, city, region, across administrative border territories), as well as independently of the nature of the branding process, if it is a novel one or an exercise in rebranding.

Table 1.4. summarizes the main and sub-research objectives of this study.

Table 1.4. Main and sub-research objectives of this Ph.D. project/thesis.

Main-research objective	Sub-research objectives	Objectives discussed in
To contribute to the advancement and maturation of the place-branding field, by: taking it to be an instrument within the strategic spatial planning approach, thus lending a more strategic approach and geographical/spatial consciousness to the process of place branding; by discussing its relevance and effectiveness in supporting economic and socio-spatial realignment; by contributing to reimagining processes and structural change through civic participation and the shaping of clearly envisioned, agreed, socially responsible and realistic futures, independently of the spatial scale of application (country, neighbourhood, districts, city, region, across administrative border territories), as well as independently of the nature of the branding process, if it is a novel one or an exercise in rebranding.	To clarify why and how place branding can be used as an instrument in strategic spatial planning to support reimagining processes and structural change.	Chapter 2 (published journal article) **Chapter 2 is a slightly revised version of the following published journal article:** Oliveira, E. (2015a) Place branding as a strategic spatial planning instrument. *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy*, 11(1): 18-33.
	To understand how place branding has (or has not) been approached in strategic spatial planning documents, spatial development plans, strategic initiatives and policy documents.	Chapter 3 (published journal article) **Chapter 3 is a slightly revised version of the following published journal article:** Oliveira, E. (2015b) Place Branding in Strategic Spatial Planning: A Content Analysis of Development Plans, Strategic Initiatives and Policy Documents for Portugal 2014-2020, *Journal of Place Management and Development*, 8(1): 23-50.
	To explore through a case study the relevance of co-creation in a place-branding strategy by understanding how content analysis can be used to identify and understand the way tourists and travellers perceive a place and its image.	Chapter 4 (published journal article) **Chapter 4 is a slightly revised version of the following published journal article:** Oliveira, E. and Panyik, E. (2015) Content, Context and Co-creation: Digital Challenges in Destination Branding with References to Portugal as a Tourist Destination. *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, 21(1): 53-74.

To discuss the effectiveness of civic participation/place actors' engagement in a place-branding strategy and in strategic spatial planning processes. To clarify the conceptual and practical challenges of developing place branding at the regional scale.	Chapter 5 (forthcoming journal article) **Chapter 5 is a slightly revised version of the following forthcoming journal article:** Oliveira, E. (2016) Place Branding as a Strategic Spatial Planning Instrument: A Theoretical Framework to Branding Regions with References to Northern Portugal. *Journal of Place Management and Development*, 9(1): (forthcoming).
To explore the relevance of tourism in a place-branding strategy and to understand the effectiveness of a regional branding strategy in responding to the contemporary challenges such as weak economic confidence and unemployment.	Chapter 6 (published journal article) **Chapter 6 is a slightly revised version of the following published journal article:** Oliveira, E. (2014a) The Tourism Potential of Northern Portugal and Its Relevance for a Regional Branding Strategy. *Advances in Hospitality and Tourism Research Journal*, 2(2): 54-78.
To understand the extent to which place branding as a strategic spatial planning instrument can be employed across administrative border regions.	Chapter 7 (see below) **Chapter 7 is a slightly revised version of the following published book chapter and journal article:** Oliveira, E. (2015c) Constructing Regional Advantage in branding the cross-border Euroregion Galicia-northern Portugal. *Regional Studies, Regional Science*, 2(1): 340-48 - and - Oliveira, E. (2015e) A Strategic Spatial Planning Approach to Cross-Border Place Branding with references to Galicia and Northern Portugal, in: S. Zenker and B.P. Jacobsen (Eds.) *Inter-regional place branding: best practices, challenges and solutions*, Cham, Switzerland: Springer International Publishing, pp. 115-137.

Regional scale as the primary spatial context of analysis

The objectives stated in Table 1.4. have been translated into research questions that are presented in further detail below.

1.3.2. Research questions

By depicting the theoretical linkage between place branding and the strategic spatial planning approach, the theoretical framework was constructed in line with the arguments that support the primary strand of reasoning. The theoretical framework guided the data collection and was enriched throughout the four-year research project with reference to additional literature, knowledge gained during my participation in international conferences and the practical experiences of the selected case study. The main research question of this Ph.D. thesis is:

> How and why might (and, eventually, should) place branding be taken as an instrument in the strategic spatial planning approach (thus contributing to the improvement of the socio-spatial and spatial-economic conditions), reshaping responses to contemporary challenges faced by places and shape clearly envisioned, agreed, socially responsible and realistic futures for places?

The analysis of the main research question is guided by six sub-research questions, one for each of the six components/vectors running through this Ph.D. thesis, and which are represented in the theoretical framework debated to a greater extent in chapters 2 and 5 and complemented by chapter 7 (for the sub-research question number six). The six sub-research questions are:

> **1:** Is place branding as a strategic spatial planning instrument able to identify current economic, social and political constraints as well as identify place qualities, strategic domains, assets and attributes and further understand to what extent those strategic domains would support a regional branding strategy?

> **2:** Would a place-branding initiative that is integrated as an instrument in strategic spatial planning be able to support strategic structural change, enable economic and social transformation in a place, thus responding to the contemporary challenges such as weak economic confidence and unemployment as well as generating new images or reframing current ones and change public agendas?

> **3:** Who are the place actors, experts and organizations that must be involved in a potential place-branding initiative that is integrated as an instrument in strategic spatial planning? In addition, to what extent can the messages/content produced by tourists/travellers be integrated in a place-branding strategy?

4: Would a place-branding initiative integrated as an instrument in strategic spatial planning be able to support the envisioning of shared, better and realistic futures for a place, such as a region?

5: Would a place-branding initiative integrated as an instrument in strategic spatial planning be able to reinforce place feelings and place identity, environmental identity (the senses of places) cultural identity (the spirit of a place), historic identity (the roots of a place), social identity (the sense of belonging) or civic identity (the sense of citizenship)?

6: To what extent can branding northern Portugal be differentiated from branding the country as a whole, and how can the branding of Portugal be differentiated from the branding of Spain? In addition, how might the branding of northern Portugal explore strategic spatial planning and place-branding synergies with the Spanish Autonomous Community of Galicia?

The following chapters in this thesis provide answers to the above-mentioned questions, following the research philosophy and research strategy clarified below.

1.3.3. Research philosophy

The research philosophy that guided this Ph.D. project and the case study which was conducted is interpretivism. Interpretivism actually is more than a research philosophy as it represents an approach to studying social life with the assumption "that the meaning of human action is inherent in that action" (Schwandt, 2001, p. 134). Those researchers who embrace an interpretivist stance share very specific beliefs about the nature of knowing and reality. According to Goldkuhl (2012), interpretivism is not a unified and unequivocal tradition and there are many forms of interpretivism. For instance, Butler (1998) discusses several different variants of interpretivism such as conservative, constructivist, critical and deconstructionist.

The aim of understanding the subjective meanings of individuals in studied domains is essential in the interpretive paradigm. Goldkuhl (2012) goes on to argue that the core idea of interpretivism is to work with subjective meanings already existing in the social world; that is, to acknowledge their existence, reconstruct them, understand them, avoid distorting them and use them as building blocks in theorization. Orlikowski and Baroudi (1991) state that "the aim of all interpretive research is to understand how members of a social group, through their participation in social processes, enact their particular realities and endow them with meaning, and to show how these meanings, beliefs and intentions of the members help to constitute their actions" (p. 13).

This research and the academic publications that inform it share all of the elementary characteristics of interpretivism as listed in Williams (2000), Carson *et al.* (2001) and Goldkuhl (2012). This study is also in line with a recent study on city branding developed by Kavaratzis (2008): i) the emphasis is on theory building, meaning and understanding the theoretical links between place branding and strategic spatial planning (see chapter 2); ii) previously existing theory on place

branding and strategic spatial planning is used in various chapters; iii) it is inductive research; iv) it was relatively unstructured/semi-structured at the beginning of the process and v) the involvement of the investigator (with no separation of subject and object) was considered central to the investigative process. For instance, Orlikowski and Baroudi (1991) underline that interpretive researchers can never assume a value-neutral stance, as they seem to work rather close to the practice field, which may imply high engagement in the studied practices, findings or knowledge claims that are created as the investigation proceeds. Despite what I have argued above, it is important to acknowledge the value and importance of external ideologies and beliefs that also play an important role in the research process. Besides adopting an interpretivist paradigm, the research strategy is presented in further detail below.

1.3.4. Research strategy

According to Yin (2003), there are three conditions that determine the form of a research strategy: the type of research question posed the extent to which the investigator has control over the behavioural events and the focus on contemporary or historical events. This Ph.D. project adopted the case-study method as a research strategy. The case study of this project is the region of northern Portugal (NUTS II), which includes eight sub-regions (NUTS III) - Alto Minho, Cávado, Ave, Porto Metropolitan Area (Metropolitan Area of Porto/Área Metropolitana do Porto, referred to henceforth as AM Porto), Alto Tâmega, Tâmega e Sousa, Douro and Terras de Trás-os-Montes and 86 municipalities (see Figure 1.7. for the region's geographical location).

In line with previous studies (see Braun, 2008; Kavaratzis, 2008; Pasquinelli, 2011/2012), the case-study approach appears to be the most adequate research strategy within place branding. Olesen (2011) states that it is an adequate method in conducting research in the domain of strategic spatial planning. Both scholars — Pasquinelli (2011/2012) in a study dedicated to inter-regional place branding and Olesen (2011) in a study dedicated to strategic spatial planning — argue that in cases where the boundaries between the phenomenon and research context are not clearly evident (Yin, 2003), the case study is a peculiarly useful research approach because it considers a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context (Yin, 2003). This makes the case study a particularly appropriate research approach, not only for this Ph.D. project but also for research within the fields of place branding and spatial planning. The reason is that planning and branding practices must be understood within the particular context in which they are embedded, as the observed phenomena are not "easily observable outside the natural settings in which they occur" (Bonoma, 1985, p. 202).

Yin (2003) argues that the case-study approach is relevant when "a 'how' or 'why' question is being asked about a contemporary set of events, over which the investigator has little or no control" (p. 9). Chapter 2 of this thesis discusses 'why' and 'how' place branding can be used as an instrument in strategic spatial planning to support structural changes in places. In line with Braun (2008), in this thesis, the case-study findings can be considered as experiences to test the applicability and explanatory capacity of the theoretical framework that is presented below and debated in chapters 2, 5 and the Conclusion chapter. Several comparative examples are provided throughout the thesis. A more in-depth comparative case is provided in chapter 7, which dedicates particular attention to the potential place branding and cross-border planning synergies between northern Portugal and the

Spanish Autonomous Communities of Galicia. The reasons to adopt Portugal (specifically, its northern region) as a case study are presented in further detail below.

1.3.5. The case study choice

The reasons that justify the selection of northern Portugal as the case study area are manifold. First, this Ph.D. thesis follows a M.Sc. thesis developed by me between 2008 and 2011 on the topic "Territories, brands and competitiveness: the Minho region and its international promotion" (see Oliveira, 2011). This academic work supported the research proposal submitted in April 2011 to the FCT, which was awarded in September 2011. Secondly, as I mentioned above, this Ph.D. project was funded by the FCT with the specific intention of researching place and destination branding, in both theory and practice, by taking northern Portugal as a case study. The Ph.D. project proposal highlighted tourism as a key strategic domain for northern Portugal, following the conclusions debated in Oliveira (2011). The tourism potential of Portugal and its northern region is subsequently debated in chapters 4, 5 and 6. Thirdly, as emphasized strongly in chapter 3, the literature on place branding that takes Portugal, Portuguese regions or cities as case studies is almost non-existent. Thus, this thesis contributes not only to place-branding literature worldwide but also to the development of place-branding research and practices by building empirical evidence of Portuguese territories.

The few studies on place branding that adopt cities and regions in Portugal as case studies mainly employ a business- and tourism-oriented approach, neglecting (as in other geographical contexts) a more spatially oriented planning perspective, which can bring into focus the distinctive elements of a place — this is unlikely to happen within a corporate approach. This thesis aims at providing an exploratory insight into the role of place branding as an instrument for the attainment of strategic spatial planning goals, thus contributing to filling the literature gap related to more strategic spatial planning-oriented approaches to the process of branding places beyond northern Portugal.

Within the case-study research approach, a multi-method strategy was adopted for the empirical investigation. First, primary data were gathered through 16 in-depth, semi-structured interviews with key regional actors and organizations with a stake (and expertise) in Portugal and northern Portugal. Secondly, secondary data were gathered through content analysis of tourism-oriented online sources of information (see chapter 4), strategic spatial plans, development plans, strategic initiatives and documented regional promotional initiatives (see chapters 3, 5 and 6).

As case study research often combines various methods of data collection and multiple types of data — such as those resulting from document analysis, archives, direct observation of the events being studied, questionnaires and in-depth interviews with people involved (Kavaratzis, 2008 in line with Yin, 2003) — the data collection for the present case study involved two methods that are clarified further below. Before data collection, a thorough literature review of place branding and strategic spatial planning was conducted.

1.3.6. Collecting and revising the literature

This Ph.D. project began with an extensive review of the relevant literature in the fields of place branding (specifically, its application at the regional scale) and strategic spatial planning (specifically, literature produced at the European level after the 1970s). However, because of the complex and multi-disciplinary nature of the subject of place branding (see Lucarelli and Berg, 2011; Kavaratzis *et al.*, 2015), the review extended to publications from several other fields that shed light on certain aspects of the subject, such as constructing a regional advantage (for example, Asheim *et al.*, 2011; Cooke, 2007), co-creation in branding tourism destinations (Volo, 2010) and destination branding (Morgan *et al.*, 2011).

The purpose of the literature review undertaken in this research is in line with the arguments of Yin (2003). Yin (2003) argues that, "novices may think that the purpose of a literature review is to determine the answers about what is known on a topic; in contrast, experienced investigators review previous research to develop sharper and more insightful questions about the topic" (p. 9). The literature review was aimed at identifying intellectual fissures in the theory and critically evaluating existing knowledge. The literature review led to the development of the theoretical linkage between place branding and the strategic spatial planning approach, and the construction of the theoretical framework debated in chapter 5 and the Conclusion chapter.

It should be noted that Carson *et al.* (2001) argued that existing theory may be used as a foundation and introduced at appropriate stages throughout a research study. In this Ph.D. project, the theoretical framework also served the purpose of guiding the research process, including the data collection and analysis specified later in this Introduction chapter — specifically, the examination of the content of the documents and online channels analysed (chapters 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7) and the decisions regarding the type of organizations and people to act as informants, and the specific questions to be asked during the interviews. At this level, the work developed by Stubbs and Warnaby (2015) on the role of stakeholders in the development of place branding was fundamental. Stubbs and Warnaby (2015) argue that understanding who stakeholders/place actors "are and the nature of their opinions about the place in question should be key determinants of any place branding strategy" (p. 101).

In this study, the theoretical framework, besides contributing to the academic discussion around the actual or potential roles of place branding as an instrument for the attainment of strategic spatial planning goals, played a crucial role in collecting primary (see section 1.3.7.) and secondary data (see section 1.3.8.) and the respective analysis.

1.3.7. Primary data collection and analysis: in-depth interviews

Responding to the call made by Oliveira (2015b) to develop place branding research by collecting primary data — as well as the request by Houghton and Stevens (2011), Kavaratzis (2012), Ashworth *et al.* (2015) and Stubbs and Warnaby (2015) to initiate an effective dialogue between place players/actors in a place's branding strategy and strategic spatial planning — a set of interviews with key regional players/actors and organizations involved in the regional planning and development of northern Portugal was employed to gather primary data. Collecting data through interviews is in line with Kavaratzis (2008) and Carson *et al.* (2001) because issues concerned with branding and

marketing in a place-specific context require in-depth analysis. Therefore, a qualitative approach (specifically, the method of conducting expert interviews) was demonstrated to be the most appropriate one for a deep analysis of the case study (Maxwell, 1998).

The interviews were all based on an interview guide (see appendix B, page 239) with a pre-formulated set of questions, thus reflecting the semi-structured interview approach (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009) and also following previous studies on place branding (see, for example, Pasquinelli, 2013; Giovanardi, 2015) and strategic spatial planning (see, for example, Olesen, 2011). The interview guide was used as an intermittent checklist of themes to be covered in the interviews, in order to elicit deeper and more rounded answers from the regional actors interviewed (see Table 1.5.). The interview guide and a brief explanation of this research project were sent with the request for an interview to a total of 32 regional actors. Sixteen actors and organizations agreed to participate (see appendix C, page 240) and sixteen declined participation in this research, or did not reply to the email that was sent out twice (see appendix D, page 241).

Table 1.5. Main and sub-themes covered by the semi-structured interview guide.

Main theme	Sub-themes
Strategic territorial diagnosis	i) Identify key economic, social and political constraints and limitations of northern Portugal; ii) Characterize the current image of northern Portugal; iii) Identify visions and perspectives on the future of the region.
Place branding at the regional scale	i) Identify key strategic domains of northern Portugal; ii) Identify and comment critically on the current branding efforts at the national (Portugal), regional (northern Portugal) and Euroregion (Galicia-northern Portugal) levels; iii) Identify the entity that could lead a regional branding strategy.
Strategic spatial planning on the national and regional scales	i) Identify the current main strategic spatial planning documents, development plans, strategic initiatives and policy documents for the period 2014–2020*; ii) Understanding the effectiveness of the current strategic spatial planning documents and instruments to enable structural change, and reinforce regional positioning and competitiveness at the regional level; iii) Identify the financial mechanism for regional planning.
Place branding in strategic spatial planning at the regional level	i) Comment critically on the effectiveness of a regional branding strategy integrated as an instrument in strategic spatial planning to support regional development and the attainment of strategic planning goals; ii) Identify political and financial mechanisms that could operationalize a regional branding strategy.

| Participation/regional actors' engagement/cross-border cooperation in strategic spatial planning and place branding | i) Characterize the cross-border cooperation between northern Portugal and Galicia;
ii) Debate a cross-border branding strategy for the Euroregion Galicia-northern Portugal;
iii) Identify and recommend key regional actors. |

Source: own elaboration based on the interview guide used during the in-depth interviewing with the regional actors (for the 23 questions, please see appendix B, page 239).

* Period coinciding with the European Union (EU) multiannual financial framework 2014 to 2020.

The interviewees were selected on the basis of their experience and expertise in dealing with strategic spatial planning and regional development in northern Portugal. The selection of the respondents began as a process of "convenience sampling" (Neuman, 2011, p. 267) as a result of knowledge gained in previous studies (Oliveira, 2011) and continued as a snowball sampling. Interviews were carried out at the interviewees' workplaces in December 2013; March, July and September 2014 and February 2015 (see Table 1.6.). Two interviews were conducted online, and lasted around one hour. They were all carried out in Portuguese, recorded digitally with the permission of the participants and were subsequently fully transcribed with the key parts translated into English (Kent, 1999).

Table 1.6. List of key regional actors interviewed, their role and interview date.

Interviewee number and name of the institution*	Representing**:	Interview date
IN 1 - North Regional Coordination and Development Commission (CCDRN)	Regional strategic planning Technical expertise on regional planning and development	March 2014
IN 2 - CCDRN-II (policy/decision-making)	Regional policy and decision-making Regional development European Union finantial frameworks	September 2014
IN 3 - Regional Entity of Tourism of Porto and Northern Portugal (TPNP)	Regional tourism Tourism planning and development Destination branding at regional level Cross-border regional cooperation	March 2014
IN 4 - Regional Development Agency of the Ave Valley (ADRAVE)	Regional development Rural development Local entrepreneurship Low-density areas	March 2014
IN 5 - European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation Galicia-northern Portugal (GNP- EGTC)	Cross-border Galicia-northern Portugal Cross-border synergies between universityes, research centres and entreprises Cross-border labour mobility	September 2014

IN 6 - Health Cluster Portugal (HCP)	Regional higher education, research and development on health sciences Internationalization of health related activities	June 2014
IN 7 - Textile and Clothing Association of Portugal (ATP)	Regional economy, textiles, agro-food Regional higher education, research and development	March 2014
IN 8 - University of Minho (UM-I)	Regional higher education, research and development	September 2014
IN 9 - Department of Economics School of Economics and Management (UM-II)	Regional economy, textiles, agro-food Regional higher education, research and development Regional tourism, Regional wines and other products	March 2014
IN 10 - Department of Economics School of Economics and Management (UM-III)	Regional economy, textiles, agro-food Regional higher education, research and development Galicia-northern Portugal expert Cross-border cooperation	March 2014
IN 11 - Department of Civil Engineering School of Engineering (UM-IV)	Regional strategic planning Regional mobility and accessibility Place marketing and competitiveness	March 2014
IN 12 - Geography Department Social Sciences Institute (UM-V)	Spatial planning Regional development, low-density areas Tourism planning and development Tourism geographies	December 2013
IN 13 - Quaternaire Portugal - Corporate society working on Spatial Planning; Strategic Planning (QP)	Regional strategic planning Regional development, low-density areas	December 2013
IN 14 - A member of the business community (TRP)	Regional mobility and accessibility	December 2013
IN 15 - A member of the civic society (CS)	Regional mobility and accessibility	March 2014
IN 16 - PortugalFoods (PF)	Regional economy, textiles, agro-food	February 2015

Source: own elaboration. *Please see the full list of regional actors of northern Portugal interviewed in appendix C, page 240. **Due to the complexities of some representatives' situations, numerous intersections of responsibilities occurred.

The interviews were semi-structured with open-ended questions, which were considered the most appropriate for the purpose of this project for four main reasons. First, and in line with

Harvey-Jordan and Long (2001), the open-ended interview structure allows themes to be developed throughout the conversation in a flexible way, as the loose structure facilitates matters. The flexibility resulting from the semi-structured form also allows the researchers to explore themes that would emerge from the experts' experience and knowledge, which reveals more and assists us to understand the strategic spatial planning process taking place in Portugal and northern Portugal, for instance, as well as regional branding attempts where they occur. Secondly, this flexible form was considered adequate in order to successfully deal with the multiplicity of experts interviewed who have different backgrounds, such as research into regional economics, regional planning, tourism planning and development, destination marketing, plan- and policymaking. Thirdly, according to Kavaratzis (2008) and Pasquinelli (2011/2012), the branding process of places is a complex matter and includes several interrelations between spatial issues, spatial contexts and interlocutors. Therefore, in-depth interviews are considerably more appropriate to "deal with such complex matters and the less degree of structure allowed room for clarifications and adequate descriptions of interrelations" (Kavaratzis, 2008, p. 23). Moreover, Kent (1999) argues that interviews with open-ended questions are more responsive in terms of what individuals have to say. Fourthly, Flyvbjerg (2006) emphasizes, for example, how theoretical knowledge can be derived from in-depth research into how planning is carried out in practice. In addition, Kavaratzis (2008) states that since we lack a clear and unanimous definition of place branding, a flexible yet rigorous method of data collection would make a better contribution to the debate on place branding and obtain a clear understanding of the interviewees' perceptions.

The interviews began in a rather exploratory manner. First, the research topic was introduced, which sparked immediate responses from the interviewees. This spontaneous reaction prior to the first question reflects on the explorative interview approach (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009). The interviewees were encouraged to give their account of the current socio-economic and political environments of northern Portugal, as well as the national scenarios for the same subjects and their perspectives on the future of the region.

1.3.8. Secondary data collection and analysis: documental content analysis

According to Chan and Marafa (2013), the predominant qualitative methods in place-branding research are in-depth interviews, focus groups, document or content analysis and observations. In this study, I have employed two of these qualitative methods: in-depth interviews in order to collect primary data, as I have stated above, and a documental content analysis in order to collect secondary data. In addition, statistical information was also collected and analysed. Data collection and analysis was developed in four stages.

The first stage, on secondary data collection and analysis, started with an extensive and critical analysis of the most up to date statistical information provided by different sources (for example, Statistics Portugal, North Regional Coordination and Development Commission, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, World Travel and Tourism Council), which reported on the demographic (for example, resident population or population density) and macroeconomic situations (for example, unemployment rate, GDP per capita, including the tourism sector) of Portugal and NUTS II — Northern Portugal (Norte). Some of these indicators are presented and

analysed in this Introduction chapter and in chapter 6 (which is a slightly revised version of the published journal article, following the publication of new macroeconomic and demographic indicators).

The second stage comprised analysis of the content of strategic spatial planning documents, development plans, strategic initiatives (see chapters 3 and 5) and sectoral strategic plans (for instance, for the tourism sector; see chapter 6) as sources of secondary data, mainly for the period coinciding with the EU's multiannual financial framework 2014 to 2020 (see appendix E, page 242 for the full list of documents). In attempting to understand the developments of place branding in northern Portugal, I have also analysed the recent regional promotional efforts undertaken by northern Portuguese entities, such as the initiative "Be Smart. Go Norte" (that is, "Be Smart. Go Northern Portugal" - Norte is the Portuguese word for North and the name of the NUTS II – Northern Portugal region), developed by the North Regional Coordination and Development Commission, and "Porto and the North – The essence of Portugal", developed by Regional Entity of Tourism of Porto and Northern Portugal.

The third stage responds to the call made by Ashworth *et al.* (2015) to explore theoretical perspectives in relatively recent developments in marketing theory and practice; for example, Service Dominant Logic, experiential marketing, digital marketing and branding and co-creation in place branding. In this stage, I analysed tourism-oriented online publications in which the tourism potential of Portugal (and its northern region) has been discussed (see chapter 4). Content analysis is concerned with categorizing and counting occurrences of aspects of a text's content (for example, policy documents, editorials, blog posts and opinion pieces, among others), which are assumed to be significant (Hannam and Knox, 2005). The content generated by tourists, travellers, professional travel bloggers and travel journalists who post, comment and share information on social media channels is arguably the greatest digital challenge faced by destination branding (see Munro, 2011; Munar, 2011) and strategic place branding (Hanna and Rowley, 2015).

Travel blogs, destination branding and place brand websites do not only offer detailed information, but also create virtual product experiences (Alonso and Bea, 2012). Content analysis can be used to identify and understand the ways in which tourists and travellers perceive the country as a tourist destination. According to Addis *et al.* (2007), perceptions of the potential or actual experiences associated with a place brand (for instance, for tourism purposes) can be achieved indirectly through communication tools, such as colours, typefaces, websites and advertising. The tourist-/traveller-generated content is likely to generate brand value if it is integrated into the place-branding strategy (Oliveira and Panyik, 2015), as well as providing unprecedented levels of direct engagement between place users, other place actors and organizations (Kavaratzis, 2012).

Given the fact that most of the chapters have been developed in a rather exploratory way, I acknowledge the limitations of using exclusively qualitative methods in this study, particularly those of in-depth interviews and content analysis. In addition, I also acknowledge the challenges that have emerged during the past four years of research investigating northern Portugal. To overcome such criticism, the analysis was extended to Portugal as a whole. In addition, in responding to the calls of several peers, the cross-border branding relations between Galicia and northern Portugal were also explored, including in-depth interviews with the main entity at the Euroregional level (see chapter 7

for details) and content analysis of the Joint Investment Programme for Galicia-northern Portugal 2014–2020. In spite of this, northern Portugal remained the central case study area. The geographical, demographic and economic backgrounds of the region are provided in further detail below.

1.4. Background of the case study
1.4.1. Northern Portugal
Northern Portugal is where national peripherality and a trans-frontier geography have exacerbated the decline of traditional agricultural and industrial activities in the face of the effects of globalization and increasing competition both within and beyond the EU. The region has 144 kilometres of Atlantic coastline and is the Portuguese region with the largest border area; it borders the Spanish Autonomous Communities of Galicia and Castile-Leon (see Figure 1.7.).

In Portugal, there are five layers of government which are politically accountable (directly) in certain matters or domains while in others subjects of day-to-day life the political/decision-making is centralised in the central/national government. Leaving aside the autonomous regions of Azores and Madeira, Portugal mainland has not the corresponding regional autonomous governments:

 i) The central/national government level based in the Portuguese capital of Lisbon;

 ii) The regional level (NUTS II):
  (1) **Northern region (NUTS II - Norte/north)**;
  (2) Centre region (NUTS II - Centro);
  (3) Metropolitan Area of Lisbon (NUTS II - Área Metropolitana de Lisboa);
  (4) Alentejo (NUTS II - Alentejo);
  (5) Algarve (NUTS II - Algarve);
  (6) Autonomous Region of Azores (NUTS II - Região Autónoma dos Açores);
  (7) Autonomous Region of Madeira (NUTS II - Região Autónoma da Madeira).

 iii) The intermunicipal level (=NUTS III) with intermunicipal communities. For instance, in northern Portugal there are 7 intermunicipal communities and 1 metropolitan area (see Figure 1.7. for the spatial limits of each community):
  (1) The Intermunicipal Community of Alto Minho;
  (2) The Intermunicipal Community of Cávado;
  (3) The Intermunicipal Community of Ave;
  (4) Metropolitan Area of Porto/Área Metropolitana do Porto;
  (5) The Intermunicipal Community of Alto Tâmega;
  (6) The Intermunicipal Community of Tâmega e Sousa;
  (7) The Intermunicipal Community of Douro
  (8) The Intermunicipal Community of Terras de Trás-os-Montes;

The inter-municipal communities and the two metropolitan areas (Porto and Lisbon), have been gaining particular relevance following the elaboration of the Regional Strategic

Guidelines/Operational Programme 2014-2020, in line with European Union strategy 2020 and the subsequent financial programmes.

iv) The municipal level (86 municipalities are located in northern Portugal);

v) The civil/administrative parish level (1426 parishes are located in northern Portugal).
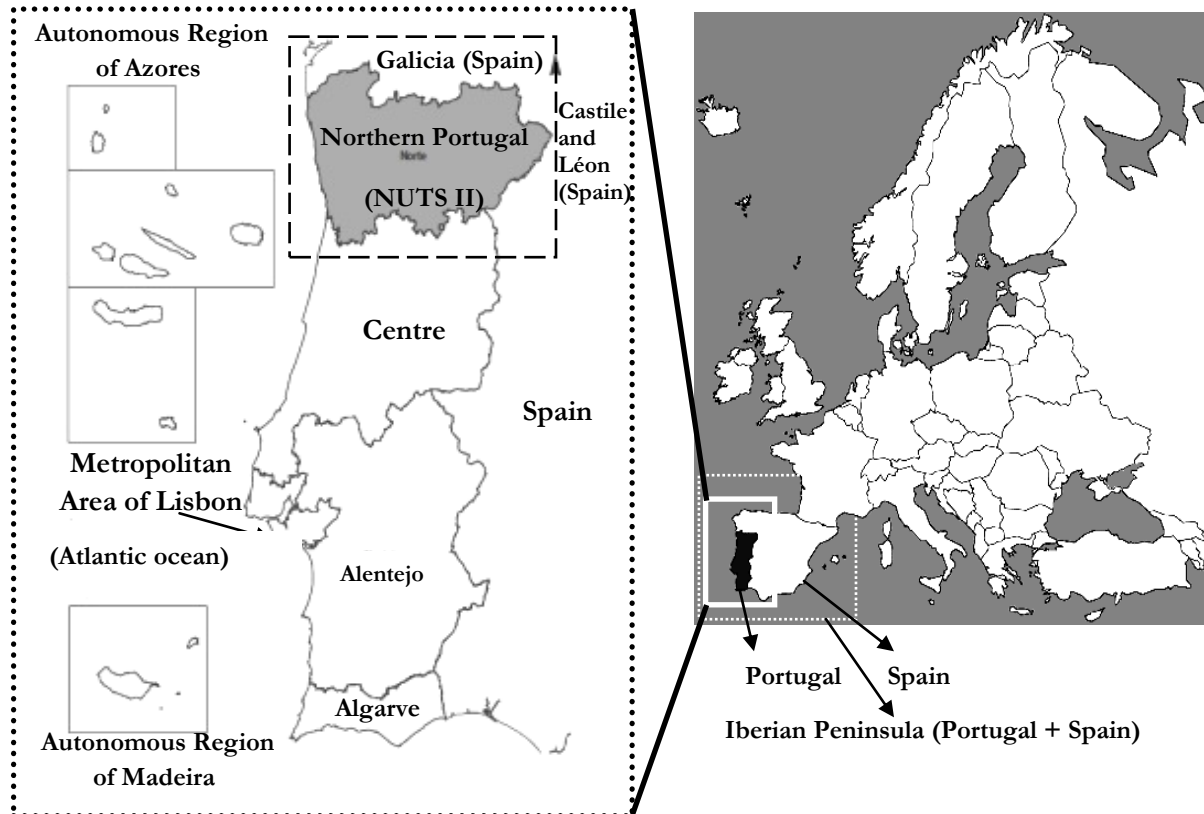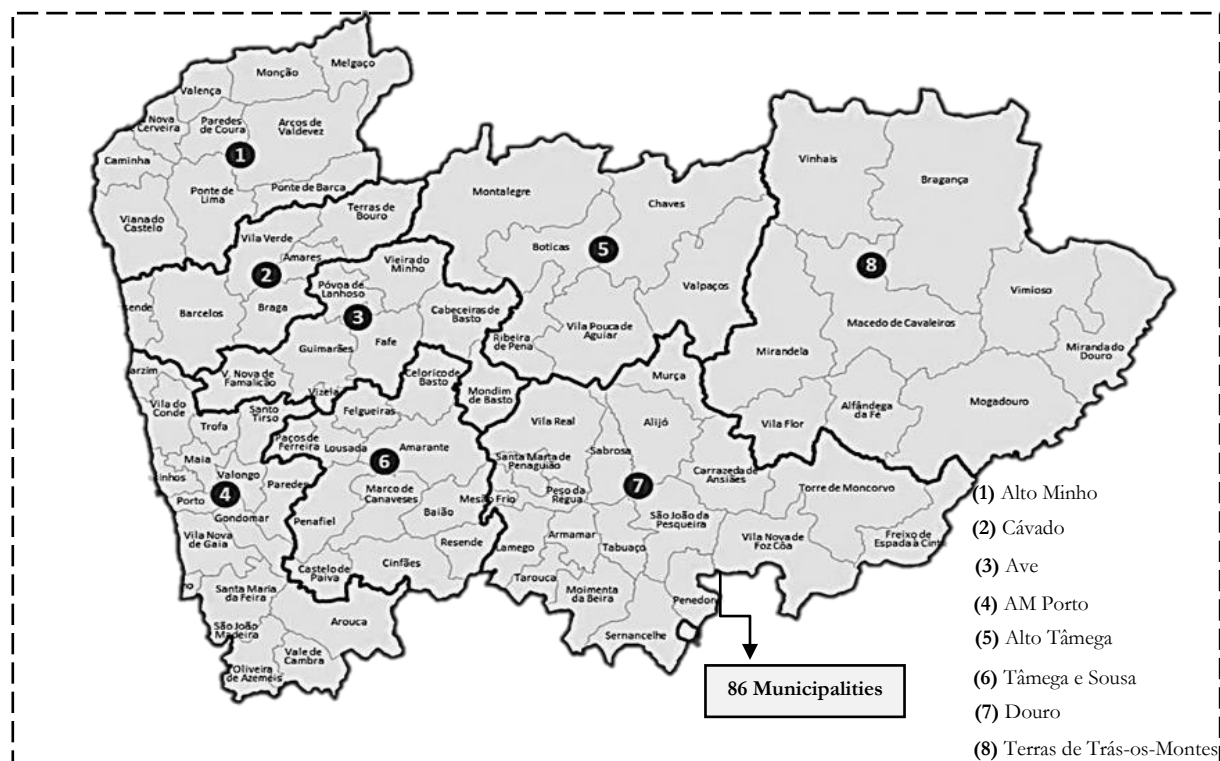
Figure 1.7. Geographical representation of Portugal, Northern Portugal (NUTS II) and NUTS III (1-8). *Source*: own elaboration based on CCDRN (2014a, 2014b) and EUR-Lex (2014).

The spatial-planning regime remains rather static and is organized around administrative, rather than functional, territories (OECD, 2014b). As I argue in chapter 5, strategic spatial planning at the country and regional levels remains underdeveloped (see Rosa Pires, 2005). In addition, as stated by the OECD (2014b), "in the view of the central government, provisions for integrated planning of land use, transport, economic and infrastructure development exist in theory but are rarely applied in practice" (p. 151).

1.4.2. Spatial-demographic setting

According to the latest territorial statistics published by Statistics Portugal (INE, 2015), NUTS II of northern Portugal has a resident population of approximately 3.7 million people, which corresponds to 35 per cent of the national resident population, and 36 per cent of the national youth population aged between zero and 34 years (see Table 1.7.). The population density (number per square kilometre) in 2013 was 113 in Portugal, 171 in northern Portugal, 81 in the central region, 931 in AM Lisbon, 24 in Alentejo, 88 in Algarve, 107 in Azores and 326 in Madeira. The proportion of early leavers from education and training in 2010 was approximately 28 per cent in Portugal and 31 per cent in northern Portugal — the highest rate in mainland Portugal. Only the Autonomous Region of Azores surpassed this figure, with approximately 37 per cent of students leaving the educational system before completing their studies.

Northern Portugal registered in 2013 a crude rate of increase of -0.60 per cent and a crude rate of natural increase of -0.17 per cent. In the same year, and according to the same source (INE, 2015), the crude birth rate was 7.3 per 1,000 people which represents the third lowest in the country (7.9 per 1,000 people on the Portuguese mainland), and a crude death rate of 9.0 per 1,000 people, the lowest in the country (10.2 per 1,000 people on the Portuguese mainland).

The ageing ratio in 2013 was 125.3, which compares to 138.9 on the Portuguese mainland. For a value calculated between the years of 2011 and 2013, the life expectancy at birth of the resident population was 80.32 years, which compares to 80.13 years on the Portuguese mainland. The life expectancy of 65 years for the resident population in northern Portugal was 19.04 years for the same period, which compares to 19.05 years on the Portuguese mainland and 18.97 years in Portugal (including the autonomous regions of Azores and Madeira). In Portugal, 55 per cent of the population lives in cities of different sizes — the share of population in metropolitan areas (urban areas with more than 500,000 inhabitants) is 39 per cent, compared to 49 per cent in the OECD area (OECD, 2014b).

Table 1.7. Demographic indicators for Portugal and its northern region (NUTS II).

	Resident population	Population density	Crude rate of increase	Crude rate of natural increase	Crude birth rate	Crude death rate	Total fertility rate	Ageing ratio	Life expectancy at birth of resident population
	3RD quarter 2014	2013							2011–13
	N.º	N.º/km2 (1)	%		‰ (2)		Number		Years
Portugal	10,427,301	113.1	- 0.57	- 0.23	7.9	10.2	1.21	136.0	80.00
Northern region	3,694,152	171.2	- 0.60	- 0.17	7.3	9.0	1.09	125.3	80.32

Source: own elaboration based on the Statistical Yearbook of Northern Portugal Region 2013 (INE, 2014). (1) Number per square kilometre. (2) Per mile.

Portugal and its regions have been dramatically losing numbers of their populations in the past few years (Dias, 2015). The crude rate of natural increase in 2013 was negative for the Portuguese mainland (-0.23 per cent) and in its northern region (-0.17 per cent). These numbers reflect the trend of the past few years (Table 1.8.). According to the World Bank Development Indicators 2013/2014 cited in Dias (2015), Portugal ranks fifth in the world of countries that have lost the most numbers of people in 2014 (-0.6 per cent, approximately 60,000 individuals). The World Economic Forum (2015) revealed that Puerto Rico tops the list of the fastest shrinking countries, with a population decline of 1.3 per cent from 2013 to 2014. The top 10 is dominated by EU member states, such as Spain and Bulgaria, which both experienced a population decline of half a per cent over the period. For Spain, this amounts to around 215,000 individuals.

Table 1.8. Crude rate of natural increase (%) for Portugal and its northern region.

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Portugal	0.04	0.07	0.02	0.03	-0.01	n/info	-0.05	-0.04	-0.06	-0.17	-0.23
Northern region	0.18	0.19	0.13	0.13	0.07	0.09	0.03	0.02	0	-0.12	-0.17

Source: own elaboration based on the Statistical Yearbook of Northern Portugal Region 2013 (INE, 2014). The grey highlights represent the negative rate of natural increase (%).

Furthermore, and according to Statistics Portugal (INE, 2015), approximately 134,624 individuals left Portugal in 2014 in the hope of finding work or continuing their studies abroad. This phenomenon is not a novelty but, rather, the confirmation of a trend. In 2012, a record was set for the first time in five decades, when 121,418 individuals left the country. In 2013, the number grew to 128,108. Therefore, the rise of emigrants in 2014 was 5.1 per cent. The net migration observed in northern Portugal has been negative since 2003 (-1,395 reaching -15,730 individuals in 2013), which corresponds to a crude migratory rate of -0.43 per cent. This closely reflects the tendency registered in Portugal more generally (a crude migratory rate of -0.35 per cent in 2013) (see Figure 1.8.).

Figure 1.8. Net migration observed in Portugal and its northern region between 2000 and 2013 (number).
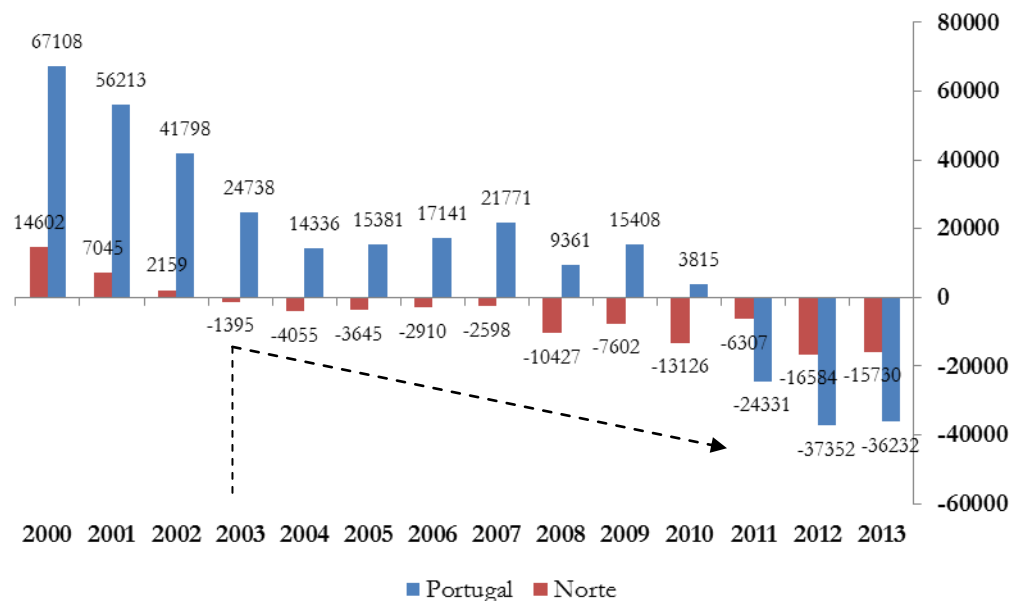
Source: own elaboration based on INE (2014).

A surprising statistic (or perhaps not) is the evolution of the ageing ratio in Portugal between 2003 and 2013. In only 10 years, the ageing ratio rose by more than 30 per cent, and registered 136 individuals 65 or over for every 100 individuals aged between 0 and 14 years (INE, 2015). The total fertility rate registered in 2013 reveals that neither Portugal nor its regions are renewing their populations. Northern Portugal is the region in mainland Portugal with the lowest total fertility rate in 2013 that is 1.02 per cent against 1.21 per cent in Portugal, 1.11 per cent in the Centre region, 1.44 per cent in AM Lisbon, 1.22 per cent in Alentejo, 1.31 per cent in Algarve (INE, 2015).

The ageing of the population has been identified as one of the major challenges posed to societies, according to Albrechts (2010a, 2010b), which cannot be tackled or managed with the concepts and mindset of traditional spatial planning. Reflections on macroeconomic indicators at the national and regional levels are presented below.

1.4.3. Spatial-economic setting

In line with the OECD Regional Outlook 2014 (OECD, 2014b), Portugal had the seventh largest regional disparities in GDP per capita of the OECD countries. In the previous decade, regional growth was the highest in Madeira (2.1 per cent) and the lowest in Alentejo (0.2 per cent). According to the OECD (2015a), Portugal was hit hard by the economic and financial crisis, and unemployment hit record levels, including in its northern region. However, a speedy decline in unemployment rates (and an increase in employment rates) has been recorded since early 2013. Unemployment rates fell while employment rose for seven consecutive quarters (11.9 per cent in Portugal and 13.4 per cent in northern Portugal in the 2nd quarter of 2015, in line with CCDRN, 2015a. See for details chapter 6). However, it is important to underline here the increase of emigrants, since once they leave Portugal they will not be registered in the unemployment rates. Therefore, analyses of the unemployment rate have to be approached with considerable criticism. With nearly 60 per cent of unemployed individuals having been out of work for more than a year, reducing unemployment still further will be more difficult as workers become increasingly disengaged from the labour market.

The OECD (2015a) highlights another key challenge for Portugal and its regions: that is, to reduce the high level of youth unemployment (33.4 per cent in Portugal and 34.5 per cent in northern Portugal), which is one of the highest in the OECD area.

In September 2014, the minimum wage was increased further to €505 per month. Around 13 per cent of the employed population receives the minimum wage of €505 per month. This represents a social and economic challenge, argued the OECD (2015a), as to supporting minimum-wage workers in Portugal who need to work very long hours in order to escape poverty. More needs to be done to support low-income families effectively. In addition, it is also important to activate policies able to connect unemployed and inactive people with jobs; for example, by strengthening the motivation and employability of jobseekers while improving their job opportunities.

The Portuguese economy is projected to grow by around 1.3 per cent in 2015 and 1.5 per cent in 2016. Exports will continue to lead the strengthening recovery as growth in Portugal's export markets, especially the EURO area, picks up. All else being equal, this will also lead to further improvements in the current account balance. However, high private-sector debt levels and high

unemployment will hold back domestic demand. The most up to date OECD Economic Outlook (see OECD, 2014b) underlines that "any successful policy reform that enhances competitiveness, including by reducing the cost of non-tradable inputs, would strengthen export performance more than assumed in the projection" (p. 12). By strengthening its export performance, Portugal would boost growth, narrow the cyclically adjusted current account deficit and further bolster international confidence in the Portuguese economy. A place-branding strategy would contribute to boosting confidence in the Portuguese economy, including that of its regions, and contribute to structural change. Reflections over other macroeconomic indicators published in August 2015 by Statistics Portugal are presented in chapter 6 of this thesis.

1.5. The role of strategic spatial planners in place branding

Branding a place is a complex task (see, for example, Ashworth and Kavaratzis, 2010), requiring the interaction of different disciplines (Kavaratzis *et al.*, 2015) as well as the participation of various experts, including strategic spatial planners. However, cities and regions have been promoted and brands have been designed by those who are more accustomed to promoting shoes or electronic equipment than publically accountable authorities. Stating this does not call into question the expertise, capabilities or integrity of those dealing with place branding in executing public-sector commissions. It does, however, raise a number of problems for spatial planning (Ashworth and Voogd, 1999).

The request that spatial planners get involved with place marketing and branding is not new. Ashworth and Voogd (1999) underline that if marketing and branding "is to be part of public sector planning then it must be exercised, or at the very least its capabilities and results understood, by public sector planners" (1999, p. 156). What is required is a combination of visions, intuition, organization and determination (Hall, 1987) to deal with the challenges of branding places, and spatial (strategic) planners must play roles that are less common in traditional approaches to spatial planning — spatial planners must now strengthen their creativity to respond proactively to the complex issues faced by places (Albrechts, 2010a; Oliveira, 2014c).

It has been assumed that some of the attempts to respond to the complex issues places are facing depend on the ability to combine the creation of strategic long-term visions with short-term actions (Albrechts, 2004) or a series of short-term projects (Hillier, 2010). The role of strategic spatial planners goes beyond the technicality of land-use plans, territorial zoning or spatial regulations. Spatial planners are also strategic navigators trying to work out future potentialities (Hillier, 2010). It is also necessary to deal with competitive agendas, place-based innovation and transnational learning processes, as well as dealing with private capital. It is paramount that we discuss and maintain the needs and hopes of the community at the core of all spatial interventions and spatial strategies. Maintaining a consistent and confident attitude on the part of spatial planners is fundamental if only to avoid alienating citizens from their living and working environments. A successful place-branding initiative, at the regional scale, for instance, that is able to integrate the stories of communities at the heart of the branding process in a participative-oriented approach is likely to enhance the perceived value of strategic spatial planning and the role of spatial planners.

According to Healey (2006a), there is an imaginative power in strategic spatial planning — a strategic spatial plan or the design of strategic plan-making can be imagined as a vision of the future of a place, such as a region. The anticipated role of place branding is to construct and convey a preferred image of a place, and to formulate a concept that resonates with a specific group of potential participants, be they external visitors, potential investors or present inhabitants (Johansson, 2012). Therefore, spatial planners must play a core role of being creative thinkers, catalysts and initiators of change (Albrechts, 1999) and develop instruments such as place branding (Oliveira, 2015a) to create better places to live, work, study, invest, play, love and dream in the long term (Oliveira, 2015f). This would only be possible if the envisioning process consists of the development of a realistic long-term vision that is operationalized with short-term actions taking into account power structures, uncertainties and competing values. Furthermore, the spatial planner must also play the role of a negotiator engaging various relevant place actors in a spatial context, in defining spatial strategies and constructing a spatial logic. Thus, they design plan-making structures and develop content, images and a decision framework through which to influence and manage spatial change. In the same line of reasoning, a spatial planner must embrace future-strategic thinking in place-branding exercises as they deal with spatial qualities, multiple place actors including citizens and organizations, place opportunities and threats and external trends and forces — all within the resources available. At its very least the role expected of the spatial planner is more complex, uncertain and its outcomes less predictable than in more traditional utopian regulatory master-planning. Figure 1.9. provides a summary of the roles that strategic spatial planners should play in a place branding strategy.
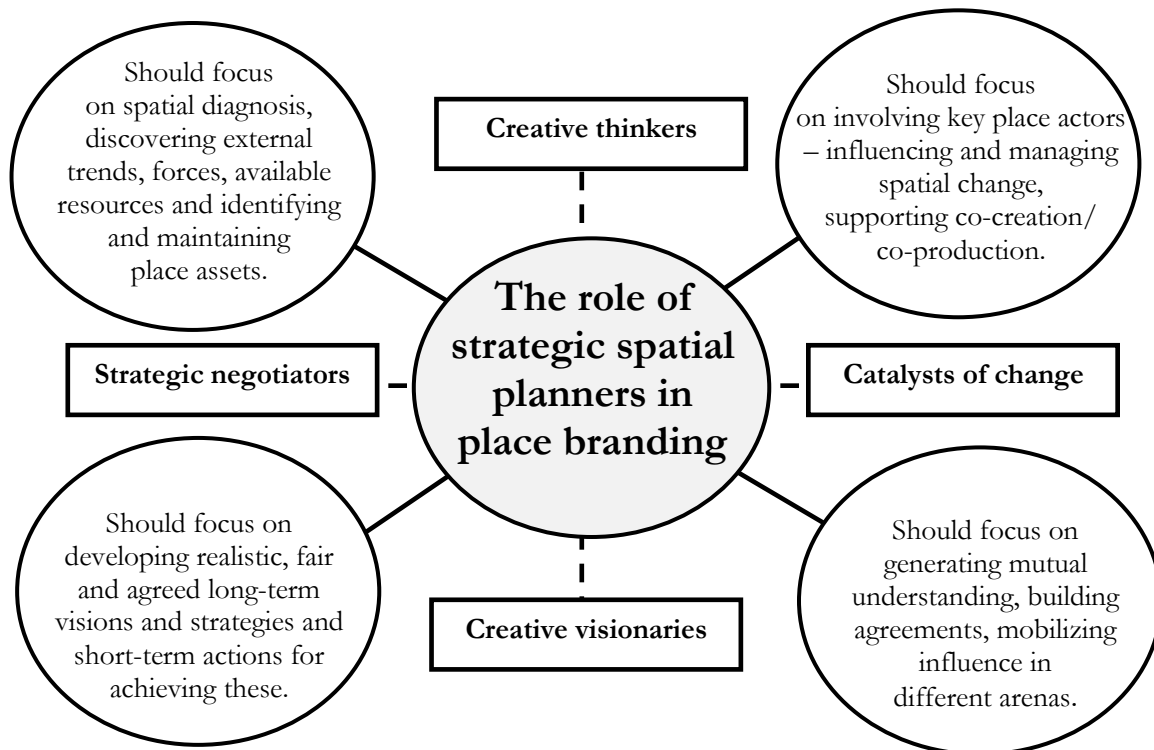
Figure 1.9. Summarizing strategic spatial planners' roles in place branding.
Source: own elaboration.

Spatial planners must understand their role in dealing with the pace of developments and complex challenges that societies are facing. In line with Albrechts (1999) and Mintzberg (1994), strategic spatial planners have played the role of negotiators by engaging with place actors in order to provide explanations of the external forces identified in the diagnostic stage. Strategic spatial planners "must be able to grasp the momentum and they must try to come up with many different responses, some of which may be unconventional, and possible unique" (Michalko, 2001, p. 2) but desirable alternatives (Albrechts, 2010a). 'Alternative' responses, here, means the discovery of structurally different futures and the design of "a transformative agenda" (Friedmann, 1987, p. 389) in which creativity emerges that has a primary need for spatial planners to deal with instruments (Albrechts, 2010a) such as place branding (Oliveira, 2015a).

Strategic planners must have the practical capacities to work in the face of conflict (Forester, 2010a), to balance interests between traditionally locked and often opposing systems (for example, of governments and business) and the open systems linked to co-production and to manage tensions between those embedded within the system (for example, politicians and policymakers), those with access to the system (such as influential actors) and those who function outside the system (such as community organizations) (Moulaert, 2011). In order to focus actively on place qualities, strategic domains, place assets and landscape - and thus contribute to the improvement of the socio-spatial and spatial-economic conditions and creating a spatial logic that is economically and socially balanced, equal and fair - spatial planners must use their imaginations and all the power available to them (Albrechts, 2015a).

In line with the role of strategic spatial planners in place branding, this thesis is divided into eight chapters. The chapters cover the ground that strategic spatial planners must also cover when dealing with place branding — including a diagnosis of the spatial condition, the visions of key place actors and the current spatial policies at the national (Portugal) and regional (northern Portugal) levels. The final chapters draw conclusions for contexts beyond that of the case study, which could be helpful for other regions dealing with place-branding processes. The next section details the structure of the thesis and provides an overview of the chapters.

1.6. Structure of the thesis

This thesis is divided in three parts and is composed of eight chapters, as illustrated in Figure 1.10. and described below. The eight chapters of the thesis are interconnected and contribute to the line of reasoning previously clarified. In Figure 1.10. the circles and lines connect the chapters to the central topic; in addition, the lines indicate connections between the chapters themselves. In an attempt to bring a more geographical/spatial-oriented approach to the process of branding places such as regions, this thesis is structured as follows. Due the fact that this thesis is the result of four years of academic work, the eight chapters are slightly revised versions of existing publications. Therefore, some repetition of ideas and methods could be identified.

PART A: THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

Chapter 1 is the present chapter and provides an introductory overview of place branding and strategic spatial planning. It also critically discusses the primary and secondary lines of reasoning and problem statement. In addition, this chapter presents the methodological approach behind the research, and explains in detail how the research was carried. The reasons behind the selection of northern Portugal as the case study area are also explained. The overall aim of this chapter is providing the reader with theoretical and methodological points of reference, by presenting the notions on which the following chapters are built and, at the same time, by explaining the objectives and the foundation of the research questions tackled throughout this study.

Chapter 2 is mainly a conceptual one. It debates place branding and the strategic approach to spatial planning. This chapter presents the two strands of reasoning introduced above and critically debates why and how place branding can be used as an instrument in the strategic spatial planning approach. The chapter emphasizes that place branding as a strategic spatial planning instrument could contribute to improvement of economic and socio-spatial logic, as well as reshaping responses to contemporary challenges faced by places, for example high unemployment rates by attracting investment and new business, creating, thus job opportunities to the maintenance of existing ones. This chapter is the theoretical backbone for the following chapters.

Chapter 2 is a slightly revised version of the following published journal article - Oliveira, E. (2015a) Place branding as a strategic spatial planning instrument. *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy*, 11(1): 18-33.

PART B: EMPIRICAL RESEARCH - PLACE BRANDING IN STRATEGIC SPATIAL PLANNING WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO NORTHERN PORTUGAL

Chapter 3 explores the roots of place-branding theory and practice in Portugal and in its northern region. It synthesizes the main literature on the subject at the national and regional levels, with a special focus on the approaches taken (for example, whether mainstream branding or spatial planning is deployed). In addition, it undertakes content analysis aimed at understanding how place branding has (or has not) been approached in spatial development plans, strategic initiatives and policy documents, mainly for the period between 2014 and 2020 at the national (Portugal), regional (northern Portugal), cross-border Euroregion (Galicia-northern Portugal) and supra-national levels. The chapter deepens the debate, following the primary strand of reasoning debated in the Introduction chapter and chapter 2. It also critically explores the actual or potential roles of place branding as an instrument for the attainment of strategic spatial planning goals through its integration in strategic spatial plan-making. The findings of this chapter justify the decision to focus on tourism and on the brands created to position Portugal and its northern region as tourism destinations (in discussion in chapters 4 and 6). Furthermore, the approach to place branding undertaken in the spatial strategic documents elaborated at the Euroregion level justifies the existence of chapter 7 in this study and the publications that support it.

Chapter 3 is a slightly revised version of the following published journal article - Oliveira, E. (2015b) Place Branding in Strategic Spatial Planning: A Content Analysis of Development Plans, Strategic Initiatives and Policy Documents for Portugal 2014-2020, *Journal of Place Management and Development*, 8(1): 23-50.

Chapter 4 shows how content analysis can be used to identify and understand the ways in which tourists and travellers perceive Portugal and its northern region as a place for tourism. Bearing in mind the fact that place branding is about far more than tourism (Kavaratzis, 2008), the preliminary findings that emerged after the first round of in-depth interviews and document content analysis motivated me to write the journal article that contributes to this chapter. This chapter contributes to rethinking place branding as suggested by Ashworth *et al.* (2015): "to explore theoretical perspectives based on relatively recent developments in marketing theory (for example, co-creation of experiences) and marketing practice (for example, digital marketing)" (p. 1). Furthermore, it fulfils one of the "seven Cs" of digital, strategic place-brand management as proposed by Hanna and Rowley (2015, p 86): "channels, clutter, community, chatter, communication, co-creation, and co-branding". The integration of this journal article on digital challenges in place branding is also justified by the recent work developed by Sevin (2016) and Therkelsen (2015). Therkelsen, for instance, examines co-creation and the changing nature of place-brand communication by highlighting the multiple dialectics involved in place branding and the active involvement of consumers — an approach that could be extended to place branding with focus on tourism and tourists/visitors. Therkelsen (2015) also primarily focuses on tourism: specifically, on a place-branding initiative proposing Denmark as a tourism destination. This chapter suggests that the application of content analysis methodology on online material could contribute to a refined place-branding initiative for Portugal and its regions, including the northern part, by integrating user-generated and travel experts' content within the place-branding strategy — a co-creation of place brands.

Chapter 4 is a slightly revised version of the following published journal article - Oliveira, E. and Panyik, E. (2015) Content, Context and Co-creation: Digital Challenges in Destination Branding with References to Portugal as a Tourist Destination. *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, 21(1): 53-74.

Chapter 5 aims at deepening the debate on place branding as a form of strategic spatial planning. Particular emphasis is given to regional actors' participation in a potential region-branding initiative for northern Portugal. This is in line with the fourth reason to rethink place branding, as stated by Ashworth *et al.* (2015), to "integrate the practice of place branding with wider theoretical considerations. Insights from the practice of place branding (for example, stakeholder management, residents' involvement, the use of social network sites) can be gained to assist and complement theoretical development" (p. 1). Two years earlier, Kavaratzis and Hatch (2013) argued similarly for an improved understanding of the relationship between place identity and place brands, and the balance of stakeholder involvement in the development of place-brand identity and place-brand management. This chapter aims at understanding the opinions of 16 key regional actors on a set of questions. A primary focus is given to understanding the opinions of regional actors on a regional-

branding strategy for northern Portugal that is integrated as an instrument within strategic spatial planning.

Chapter 5 is a slightly revised version of the following forthcoming journal article - Oliveira, E. (2016) Place Branding as a Strategic Spatial Planning Instrument: A Theoretical Framework to Branding Regions with References to Northern Portugal. *Journal of Place Management and Development*, 9(1): (forthcoming).

Chapter 6 also debates the opinions of key regional actors and offers an in-depth analysis of the main documents for the tourism sector in northern Portugal. Specifically, the two entities that one can consider the most important in terms of tourism planning, development and regional branding initiatives, among other substantive matters for envisioning better futures for the region, are: i) Regional Entity of Tourism of Porto and Northern Portugal and ii) the North Regional Coordination and Development Commission. In addition, and deepening the findings presented in chapter 3, analyses of the strategic regional planning documents - Northern Portugal Strategic Guidelines 2014–2020 and the (Portuguese) National Strategic Plan for Tourism 2013–2015 have been carried out. This chapter aims at understanding the perspectives of the two entities on a regional branding strategy for northern Portugal. It also aims at clarifying the role that tourism can play in such regional branding efforts.

Chapter 6 is a slightly revised version of the following published journal article - Oliveira, E. (2014a) The Tourism Potential of Northern Portugal and Its Relevance for a Regional Branding Strategy. *Advances in Hospitality and Tourism Research Journal*, 2(2): 54-78.

Chapter 7 reflects the findings of chapter 3 and the opinions of the regional actors interviewed for the purposes of this thesis. If the findings reveal a more mature approach to place branding than that of the European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation Galicia-northern Portugal, it is because the regional actors have underlined the possible synergies that northern Portugal can establish with the Spanish Autonomous Community of Galicia. This is not only justified by the strong cooperative ties between the two regions but also by the fact that this Euroregion will benefit greatly from the EU multiannual financial framework 2014 to 2020, specifically through the programme INTERREG V-A (also called INTERREG Europe) Spain-Portugal 2014–2020. In February 2015, the European Commission approved the application of €288 million in cross-border initiatives between the two countries on the Iberian Peninsula. This chapter adopts a strategic spatial planning approach to cross-border place branding in order to discuss the extent to which cross-border branding can enhance the reputations of and give visibility to northern Portugal and Galicia. Key findings from a journal article on constructing a regional advantage have been integrated in the concluding part of this chapter.

Chapter 7 is a slightly revised version of the following publications - Oliveira, E. (2015c) Constructing Regional Advantage in branding the cross-border Euroregion Galicia-northern Portugal. *Regional Studies, Regional Science*, 2(1): 340-48. and Oliveira, E. (2015e) A Strategic Spatial Planning Approach to Cross-Border Place Branding with references to Galicia and Northern

Portugal, in: S. Zenker and B.P. Jacobsen (Eds.) *Inter-regional place branding: best practices, challenges and solutions*, Cham, Switzerland: Springer International Publishing, pp. 115-137.

PART C: CONCLUSIONS

Chapter 8 is the Conclusion chapter and synthesizes the main conclusions of the thesis and details future challenges for investigation. The chapter returns to the theoretical contribution postulated in chapter 2, and attempts to augment the related explorative efforts, by building on the findings of chapters 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7. The conclusion provides the reader with an alternative view on the debates on place branding and strategic spatial planning instruments. Suggestions for future research are also provided, as the important matter is to keep the discussion alive, thus contributing to the maturation of place branding and alternative instruments of the strategic spatial planning approach.
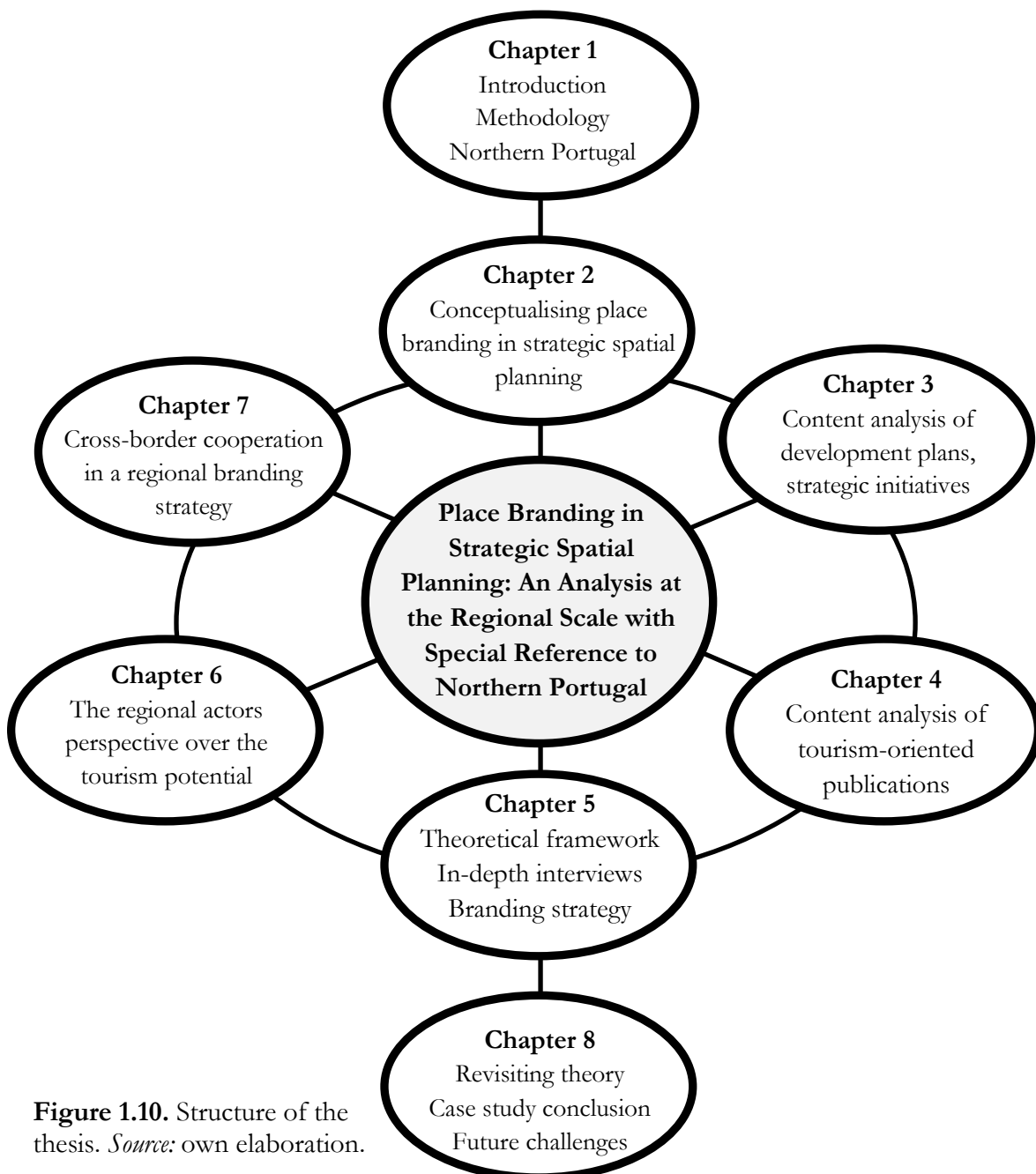
Figure 1.10. Structure of the thesis. *Source:* own elaboration.

Chapter 2: Conceptualising place branding in strategic spatial planning

Chapter overview

Places are facing major challenges at the environmental, financial and economic levels. These crucial issues demand structural changes and emphasise the need for robust strategic thinking and active instruments that shape and frame what a place is and what it aims to become. As traditional planning instruments become markedly less effective, spatial planners are required to develop new instruments that cope more effectively with the challenges they face in an unbalanced, dynamic and complex environment, while at the same time addressing the social, spatial and economic needs of a place. Place branding has been used to foster economic restructuring, social inclusion and cohesion, political engagement and participation, place identification, and the general well-being of citizens. This chapter aims to contribute to the academic debate on regional branding, in line with the main research objective of this thesis, by discussing why and how place branding can be used as an instrument in strategic spatial planning to support a structural change in places (in line with the main research question of this thesis). This chapter emphasises that place branding as a strategic spatial planning instrument could contribute to improvement of socio-spatial and spatial-economic conditions of places and reshape responses to contemporary challenges faced by places.

2.1 Introduction

The application of branding techniques and principles to cities, countries and (to a lesser extent) to regions has proven to be an "increasingly appealing topic for academic research" (Ashworth *et al.*, 2015, p. 1), as well as a popular practice. In addition, it has become a central part of the contemporary place management agenda (Boisen *et al.*, 2011; Kavaratzis *et al.*, 2015). However, and despite the recent theoretical developments (among others, see Berg and Björner, 2014; Eshuis *et al.*, 2014; Sevin, 2014; Zenker and Rütter, 2014; Zenker, 2014; Giovanardi, 2015; Kavaratzis, *et al.*, 2015; Kavaratzis and Kalandides, 2015; Zavattaro, and Adams, 2015; Andersson, 2015; Hospers, 2015; Molainen, 2015 and Zenker and Jacobsen, 2015) and methodological contributions (Chan and Marafa, 2013; Gertner, 2011a, 2011b; Lucarelli and Berg, 2011), place branding still shows signs of being a fledgling field of research (Kavaratzis, 2012) and "little theoretical refinement seems to have occurred" (Ashworth *et al.*, 2015, p. 2). Furthermore, the gap between academic commentators and those in public- or private-sector place management actually engaging in branding appears to be as wide and unbridgeable as ever (Ashworth, 2011a, 2011b).

Drawing on the work of Vicari Haddock (2010), Giovanardi (2015, p. 2) argues that place-branding research "cannot yet be considered to be a fully authoritative domain of knowledge as long as a number of empirical, methodological and theoretical challenges remain to be tackled". Likewise, Kavaratzis and Hatch (2013) argue that recent developments in place-branding inquiry remain substantially inconsistent explanations and perspectives, rather than providing a solid contribution to theory. Using the same line of reasoning, Lucarelli and Berg (2011) and Hanna and Rowley (2011) underline the dire need for theoretical clarifications of the research domain in the field of place branding. Other commentators (see, for example, Gertner, 2011b) have pointed out that the absence

of a universally accepted definition of place branding is the primary barrier to performing a meta-analysis of place-branding variables. In addition, Sevin touches upon the difficulties of categorizing the literature on place branding because "the theoretical background of place branding is based on several disciplines" (2014, p. 48) which makes that categorization a rather complex process.

These conceptual and theoretical misalignments are happening at a time when governments, policymakers, commercial and non-profit-oriented entities are all becoming confident that a "coherent, strong and attractive place brand will help promote economic development" (Boisen *et al.*, 2011, p. 136), and is likely to support spatial transformations (Ashworth, 2011a). However, as Boisen *et al.* (2011) argue, much place-branding effort has been concerned with translating traditional methods from marketing and corporate branding to towns, cities, regions and countries. As a counterpoint to this, Andersson (2014) concludes that "geographers use many different theoretical approaches to place branding, addressing wider societal, relational and territorial perspectives than provided by traditional branding literature" (p. 151). In line with Andersson's work (2014, 2015), a few commentators have been more critical of the current discourse on place branding (see, for example, Kalandides, 2011a, 2011b; Warnaby and Medway, 2013), while some others wonder whether places should actually be branded (Ashworth, 2011a). Moreover, there is clearly a lack of consensus regarding the type of marketing and branding that applies to places (Skinner, 2008). This touches on a previous investigation by Hanna and Rowley (2008), which revealed that the focus of discussion for place branding has shifted from an almost exclusive concern with tourism to a wider business and marketing scope, and that the primary terms used in place branding are being derived from mainstream branding. Tourism was a dominant focus of place branding but it was never the only focus.

Place branding and management scholars, such as Kavaratzis and Ashworth (2010), state convincingly that the lack of understanding of the distinctiveness of places displayed by many observers and practitioners who work in the field of place branding has led to misunderstandings in terms of the social-spatial and spatial-economic implications of place branding. In addition, Kavaratzis and Kalandides (2015) claim that there is a lack of geographical/spatial understanding of the elements that constitute the place brand. Andersson (2015), following various publications by Pike (2009, 2011a, 2011b, 2013) and Ashworth *et al.* (2015), investigated the need for more spatially aware readings in place branding. Furthermore, and as argued above, the theoretical advancement of place branding has witnessed some misguidance and "is ripe for a rethinking in terms of its roots, theoretical underpinnings, practical application and expected outcomes" (Ashworth *et al.*, 2015, p. 2).

As I have argued in chapter 1, apart from the seminal work of Ashworth and Voogd (1988, 1990) — which pointed out a market-led approach to spatial (urban) planning as a promising path to explore, by highlighting the cases of two Dutch cities (Groningen and Hoogeveen) — the discussion on place marketing (and, more recently, on place branding) lacks intellectual grounding and positioning within the wider context of strategic spatial planning and spatial plan-making (chapters 3 and 5 also provide some evidence for this absence).

This chapter draws on place-branding theory in order to explain place branding as a strategic spatial planning instrument and to highlight the importance of robust strategic thinking in place-branding processes. The chapter makes such arguments with reference to the place-branding

literature (for instance, Anholt, 2007; Govers and Go, 2009; Moilanen and Rainisto, 2009; Hankinson, 2010; Kavaratzis and Ashworth 2010; Hanna and Rowley, 2011; Lucarelli and Berg, 2011; Van Assche and Lo, 2011) and strategic spatial planning literature (for instance, Friedmann, 1987, 2004; Healey, 1997a, 1997b; Hillier, 2002; Albrechts, 2004, 2006, 2010a, 2013, 2015a; Allmendinger, 2009). Furthermore, the literature on spatial design, such as Van Assche *et al.* (2012), in line with Dawson and Higgins (2009) and Rantisi and Leslie (2006), also supports this line of reasoning.

This chapter highlights the fact that place branding is not about "propaganda" or communicating to the world the judgement that a certain place is good, but more about planning for a better place and letting the world know that authorities and organizations are trying to improve it structurally and strategically. The first episodes of place marketing and (later on) place branding belonged to the stage of place promotion or place boosterism, as described in the many historical cases in Gold and Ward (1994). This chapter contributes to the theory and practice of place branding in strategic spatial planning by discussing why and how these two domains can be applied together in support of structural change, development and the reshaping of responses to contemporary economic and social challenges faced by places.

2.2 Theoretical framework in the light of two strands of reasoning

The intellectual challenge of "branding" is that people think they know what it means because we confront brands daily in the shopping mall, in the supermarket and in a variety of media channels. The word appears frequently in both common and academic discourses (Ashworth, 2012). According to Ashworth and Voogd (1994, p. 39), "there is nothing new about places being promoted by those likely to profit from their development". Moreover, embracing marketing techniques alongside other techniques within place-management planning was largely a reaction to a crisis of confidence within the planning field itself, particularly in the 1980s in the US and the UK (Kavaratzis and Ashworth, 2010).

The early stage of place-branding research argued that it should be considered a strategic process and not only a promotional activity (Ashworth and Voogd, 1990, 1994; Kotler *et al.*, 1993, 1999; Nykiel and Jascolt, 2008; Van den Berg and Braun, 1999; Warnaby *et al.*, 2005). For instance, Kavaratzis (2010) and Govers (2013) underline that place branding is far from being a simple place-promotional exercise. Place branding is "centred on the creation of a favourable image or the change of a negative or indifferent image of the place" (Ashworth and Kavaratzis, 2010, p. 237).

Following Braun's (2008) reasoning, the place-branding literature over recent years has focused more on long-term visions and strategic approaches, as opposed to the implementation of hit-and-run actions or tactical exercises. Moreover, Hankinson (2010) explains place branding as a long-term strategic activity. Vicari Haddock (2010) suggests that place branding often combines long-term visions, of fostering quality of life and place development, with short-term economic goals. Often, short-term interventions are perceived as dangerous place propaganda, where taxpayers' money is repeatedly wasted. Therefore, a smart combination of long-term strategies with short-term actions is likely to impact the future of places more effectively. Strategies are expected to minimize complexity and to promote consistent behaviour (Mintzberg *et al.*, 1998; Wiechmann, 2007). As Kavaratzis and

Ashworth (2010) emphasize, both theory and practice embrace place branding as a means to meet operational and strategic goals of places.

In looking back at the evolution of place branding as a discipline, it is important to underline the conscious application of marketing approaches by public-planning authorities as a philosophy of place management (Ashworth and Voogd, 1990; Kavaratzis, 2004). The authors Van Assche and Lo (2011) commented that the wider concept of spatial planning and its relation to place identity locates place branding within contemporary discussion by, for example, Konečnik and Go (2008), Anholt (2007, 2010), Ashworth and Kavaratzis (2010) and Hildreth (2010). Lamour argues that spatial-planning policy at the "metropolitan level" is one of the tools selected to make urban regions more attractive and that "territorial marketing has become a key strategy for spatial management" (2014, p. 19).

To decipher the "place" of place branding within spatial planning, it is necessary to reflect on the evolution of concepts such as city marketing, and its relationship with urban planning (Barke, 1999; Hankinson, 2010; Kavaratzis and Ashworth, 2010). In the 1990s, the concept of city marketing was explored under the philosophy of urban management (Ashworth and Voogd, 1990). Nine years later, Kotler *et al.* (1999) mentioned the concept of place marketing as a place-planning procedure concerning the satisfaction of the needs of target markets. The authors Deffner and Metaxas do not make a direct reference to place branding but refer to place and city marketing instead. Their approach underlines the links between place and city marketing and urban planning, and they highlight the "connection between place marketing and spatial development as an innovative approach to planning" (2006, p. 6). Later, Metaxas (2009) also argues for understanding place marketing as a strategic planning process. Following recent developments and empirical studies, Metaxas ([2010]2012) argues for place marketing as a basic factor in strategic planning policies for urban economic development.

Likewise, Deffner and Liouris (2005) explore the relationship between city marketing procedures, city planning, participatory planning and urban regeneration. In the same line of reasoning, Deffner and Metaxas (2010) research the interconnections between marketing and planning by trying to answer the question: Does marketing planning constitute strategic planning? They take as their case study the elaboration of the marketing plan of Nea Ionia, Greece (developed under the European Union project "Cultural Heritage, Local Identity and Place Marketing for Sustainable Development") by reviewing and discussing the main relevant arguments of planning, highlighting the significance of place (city) marketing procedures to the high degree of competitiveness achieved by the city (Metaxas, 2010/2012). According to Pike (2009, p. 622) "brands and branding are geographical because they are inescapably intertwined in spatial associations and connotations". However, it is important to note that not all brands are geographical and not all of them have spatial aspects. Furthermore, space and place as territories can be part of geographical entanglements of brands and branding (Pike, 2009).

The authors Van Assche and Lo (2011) note that "omitting a branding perspective in planning efforts is bound to increase their economic risks" (p. 118). However, their perspective might be criticized on the grounds that it does not mention the spatial scale of the potential economic risks that may arise from the absence of a place-branding approach in planning. The authors also omit

from their research questions such as: By whom are the rules made, or who "dictates" them? Are the interventions guided by the planners through strategic spatial plans or by the "experts" in charge of implementing the place-branding process? Both in theory and in practice, this chapter understands place branding as an instrument for spatial strategists and spatial planners, while also noting the alternative possibility that strategic spatial planning might be used in place-branding initiatives. For instance, the researchers Deffner and Metaxas (2006), underline that spatial planning alone is not strong enough to address spatial challenges; to attract businesses, investors, tourists or new residents or to create a sense of place and civic pride in its existing residents. At the same time, place branding cannot be a substitute for spatial planning. Place branding can only complement spatial planning by working simultaneously as an instrument or tool.

Similar to the ideas posed by Deffner and Metaxas (2006), this chapter argues for the use of place branding as part of strategic spatial planning. Furthermore, this chapter underlines the "place" of place branding in spatial planning within the idea of collaborative planning (see Healey, 1997a, 2003), consensus planning (see Woltjer, 2004) and communicative planning that brings together the shaping of wills, creation of identity and consensus building (Kavaratzis and Ashworth, 2008). In addition to these factors, the chapter includes the idea of participatory spatial planning (Van Assche and Lo, 2011). As Hillier (2002), Throgmorton (1996) and Innes and Booher (1999) suggest, spatial planning is the key to better coordination and integration of spatial policies. When a place's key actors/stakeholders engage in an inclusive and participatory process that involves the community's values, needs and assets, they can respond to social and economic ailments within a spatial context.

Despite the existence of some academic research on the links between place branding and spatial planning (albeit not addressing strategic spatial planning, specifically), Van Assche and Lo stress that "much terrain is yet to be uncovered by scientists in the investigation of the existing and potential linkages between spatial planning and place branding" (2011, p. 124). In addition, Pike (2009) argues that the spatial entanglements of brands and branding have received little attention and limited coverage in geography, and are unevenly recognized in other forms of social science research.

The following section will attempt to develop a theoretical framework that establishes a linkage between place branding and strategic spatial planning. To do so, I will adopt two strands:

(1) **Primary strand of reasoning** — place branding as a strategic spatial planning instrument (that is, strategic spatial planning as a value creator and ruler of the place-branding exercise), but also a possible alternative strand (2):

(2) **Alternative strand of reasoning** — strategic spatial planning could be used as an instrument within place branding (that is, place branding "dictates" the rules for strategic spatial planning).

The second strand must be interpreted as a counterpoint to the primary strand.

2.3. What is place branding?

Places work hard to attract investors, consumers, tourists and entrepreneurs, as well as residents and other talented and creative people (see Kotler *et al.*, 1999; Florida, 2002; Anholt, 2007). Countries, cities and regions also aim to attract sporting and cultural events (see Kolb, 2006; Andranovich, 2001), and strive for the attention and recognition of international media and governments (Anholt, 2007). In a nutshell, places aim to contribute to development of their own communities and to gain and/or maintain a competitive advantage in the globalized world. Competition among places occurs since alternative territories can offer similar facilities and possibilities for investing, living and visiting (Kotler *et al.*, 1999; Kavaratzis and Ashworth, 2010). Places also compete to achieve structural changes to become better places to live, to work or to visit (Rainisto, 2003; Ashworth and Kavaratzis, 2010; Hankinson, 2010), as well as implementing measures for renewing their images (Ntounis *et al.*, 2014). Hence, in order to enhance the distinctive features, assets, place-specific qualities and facilities, places have long made use of branding techniques (Anholt, 2002; Kavaratzis, 2005; Hankinson, 2010; Kavaratzis and Ashworth, 2010).

Place branding, has successfully been used as a part of policies aimed at nurturing economic restructuring, community participation, political engagement, increases in tourism revenues (Ashworth, 2011a) and support strategic change in places, for example, through reimagining, repositioning, restructuring and rescaling processes (Ashworth, 2005). Place branding aims to make a country, a region, a city or a tourism destination stand out in the complex and changing marketplace, enhance the place's reputation and image to the outside and inside worlds alike and contribute to social and economic development.

Place branding is a field of study for spatial planners, geographers, ethnographers and marketers, among others. They may want to assert the existence and individuality of the place to internal and external publics, in order to differentiate it from competitors that are more generic and thus add value (Ashworth, 2005). Place branding is also identified as a marketing-led strategy of economic development (Greenberg, 2008; Pasquinelli, 2010) that suits the operational and strategic goals of places (Kavaratzis and Ashworth, 2010). Building on the ideas of Ashworth and Kavaratzis (2010) and Ashworth (2011a), place branding is a highly flexible instrument for managing places, not least as a form of communication.

Place branding offers collaborative links between previously fairly disparate activities and departments within place authorities operating on different spatial scales, from the national to the city level, as well as bridging the different forms of ethos, working practices and approaches of public-service providers and business entities. By redefining the identification of people with places, communities and social groups, place branding represents a relationship between governments and those they govern, as well as a relationship between people and places. Place branding can be applied, regardless of scale or circumstances, as part of the solution to a wide range of often unyielding and entrenched issues, such as regional economic disparity, multiple economic and social deprivations and exclusion, urban poverty, physical dereliction and even the governance or globalization of culture (Ashworth, 2011a). Place branding is also an adaptable response over time, as spatial circumstances change and places become more complex.

This chapter formulates a place-branding definition in the vein of Ashworth's (2011a) ideas, which underline that only a few of the other instruments that are usually deployed in managing places have such a wide range of possible applications, such as flexibility in spatial contexts or responsiveness to change, as has place branding. However, place branding was only recently added to the toolbox of strategic planners and place managers (Ashworth, 2011a).

Following the research of Ashworth and Voogd (1990), Kotler *et al.* (1993), Healey (1997a, 1997b), Kunzmann (2000), Albrechts (2004, 2010a, 2013), Allmendinger and Haughton (2010), Ashworth and Kavaratzis (2010), Hankinson (2010) and Van Assche and Lo (2011), place branding as a strategic spatial planning instrument could support a consistently new direction for places to prepare better responses to macroeconomic unevenness, general economic and social imbalances and unemployment.

2.4. What is strategic spatial planning?

It is only recently that spatial planning was rediscovered as a strategic process (Wiechmann, 2007). The debate on spatial planning theory has underlined the challenges and complexity of spatial transformations by applying a paradigm based on the principles of classic rationality, which originates in positivism. The practice of strategic spatial planning, which gained popularity at the beginning of the 1990s, seemed to offer a way out of the shallows in which traditional spatial planning has sunk (Balducci *et al.*, 2011). In addition, the "turn to strategy" in spatial planning discourse is a response to the shortcomings of an incremental planning style by projects (Healey, 2007, p. 183). In addition, formulating and implementing "strategy", a fuzzy term for Wiechmann (2007), is nowadays one of the most challenging tasks of spatial (urban and regional) governance. In order to embrace the complexity of spatial developments, strategic spatial planning was positioned at the critical junction between the need for a comprehensive vision of the future and the impossibility of predicting possible distorting factors.

This chapter does not aim to describe the historical roots of strategy nor outline the history of strategic spatial planning thought. However, it is important to note that the strategic planning that originated in the 1950s was tied to the need for rapidly changing and growing corporations to manage their futures when the future itself seemed to be increasingly uncertain (Kaufman and Jacobs, 1987). Albrechts (2004) also debates the evolution of strategic planning by referring to the developments in the United States and Europe. In the early 1970s, government leaders in the United States became increasingly interested in strategic planning as a result of twisting changes related to "energy crises, demographic shifts, changing values, volatile economy" (Albrechts, 2004, p. 746).

Strategic spatial planning in Europe dated back to the 1920s and 1930s, when it was used by public and private actors alike (Mastop, 1998). The first episodes of strategic spatial planning literature attempts to state that strategic spatial planning is not a single concept, procedure or tool but a set of concepts, procedures and tools that must be tailored carefully to different situations (Quinn, 1980; Healey, 1997a, 1997b; Kunzmann, 2000; Albrechts, 2004, 2010a, 2013). Strategic spatial planning is selective and oriented to issues that really matter. Strategic spatial planning is, thus, perceived as a way to overcome the limitations of traditional spatial planning instruments and envision, in an innovative and creative way, better futures for places. Spatial strategy making implies

the combination of long-term decisions with short term actions. In addition, much of the process lies in making the tough decisions about what is most important for the goal of producing fair, equitable structural responses to problems, challenges, aspirations and diversity (Albrechts, 2004).

Strategic spatial planning could support a progressive change at various economic and social levels. Strategic initiatives are focused on the understanding of the holistic situation, the definition of realistic goals, the orientation of available strengths and the persistence of action until significant results have been achieved (Albrechts, 2004). Strategic spatial planning provides a critical interpretation of the structural challenges and problems and allows place actors/stakeholders to think creatively about possible responses. As Albrechts clarifies, strategic spatial planning is "a transformative and integrative public sector, co-productive, socio-spatial process through which visions or frames of reference, the justification for coherent actions and the means for implementation are produced. These shape, frame and reframe what a place is and what it might become" (Albrechts, 2013, p. 52). Strategic spatial planning, as opposed to strategic corporate planning, is an intrinsically political activity (Friedmann, 2004) but has been used by public and private actors alike. Pasqui (2011) states that strategic spatial planning processes are mostly political in nature, as they work on a strictly political matter, which is the definition, the renewal and the change of the spatial agenda. Hence, strategic spatial planning can be a response to challenges at economic and social level, and work as an active force for enabling change in places. In addition, it can be a force for creating, steering and envisioning a range of better futures for a place on the basis of a democratic planning process that contemplates diversity, equity and structural change (Ogilvy, 2002; Albrechts, 2013). According to Albrechts (2013), strategic spatial planning is able to support a strategic change, changing the spatial agenda and thus socially and economically improving places, strategically making them more robust and resilient, by using different instruments, for instance, place branding.

2.5. The conceptual intertwining between place branding and strategic spatial planning

Recent work of Van Assche and Lo (2011) states that place branding includes a wide range of issues and approximates research in governance and participatory planning. Governance relates here to a variety of guidance mechanisms, not necessarily restricted to public authorities, whereby social, spatial processes are consciously directed in situations of interdependence (Jessop, 1997). Although the literature on place competitiveness and entrepreneurial place (city) branding has devoted some attention to governance (Harvey, 1989; Jessop, 1997; Eshuis and Edward, 2013; Mateo and Seisdedos, 2010), the link between place branding and strategic spatial planning remains loose both theoretically and in practical terms for researchers.

With regard to the links between place branding and spatial planning, Van Assche and Lo (2011, p. 124) assert that "the synergies are there, and deserve further exploration" and highlight that a structural linkage between "place branding and spatial planning seems necessary and even urgent" if researchers in place branding want to avoid the discipline as "exclusionary neoliberal endeavour" (Van Assche and Lo, 2011, p. 124). However, spatial planning should be understood as a democratic process, operating in the context of multi-stakeholder governance, scientific expertise and plan making (Allmendinger, 2009; Van Assche *et al.*, 2012). In addition, it can be procedural or

substantive, design-oriented or rule-driven, and dominated by a constellation of political, economic and legal spatial actors (Van Assche *et al.*, 2012). Spatial planning and strategic spatial planning are often perceived as tautological concepts; however, the evolution of strategic spatial planning clarifies that not all planning is strategic. What is more, strategic spatial planning is as much about process as it is about institutional design (Albrechts, 2004). The two terms "strategic" and "planning" also bring to mind an attempt to rethink ways of dealing with spatial issues and the planning relationship between the present and the future (Healey, 2007) in a more innovative and transformative way (Albrechts, 2013). In this line of thinking, Balducci and Fedeli (2011) critically reflect on the opportunities for innovation generated by a strategic approach to spatial planning as opposed to rigid and hierarchical forms of spatial planning.

Despite theoretical developments in place branding (see Lucarelli and Berg, 2011; Kavaratzis, 2012; Zenker and Rütter, 2014), the practice itself demonstrates significant misconceptions as I aim to demonstrate further in this thesis. This chapter envisages place branding as a strategic spatial planning instrument (1). That perspective will guide the following discussion, being aware of the two possible strands of debate:

(1) **Primary strand of reasoning**: place branding as a strategic spatial planning instrument;
(2) **Alternative strand of reasoning**: strategic spatial planning as an instrument in a place branding process (see Figure 2.1.).

Thus, what sustains the argument of taking place branding in strategic spatial planning (1 or primary strand of reasoning postulated in this thesis)?

Albrechts (2013) interprets strategic spatial planning as able to support a strategic change and thus socially and economically improve places by using different instruments. Some European countries use detailed planning instruments, such as regulatory zoning instruments, building control instruments and implementation instruments. However, place branding as a strategic spatial planning instrument is not explored in the strategic spatial planning literature or place branding literature. Therefore, this chapter aims to establish the links based on possible connections, even metaphorical or more theoretical, and also to contribute to the practice of place branding.

I acknowledge that there are also interactions between the multiple spatial scales in terms of strategic planning and place branding. There are, for example, interactions between a regional brand and a city brand. The case of Hamburg regional branding process is provided in chapter 5. In some cases this interactions may shadow each other making it difficult to keep distinction. Other cases multi scale cooperation, including across borders (see chapter 7 and Oliveira, 2015c, 2015e) can be established.
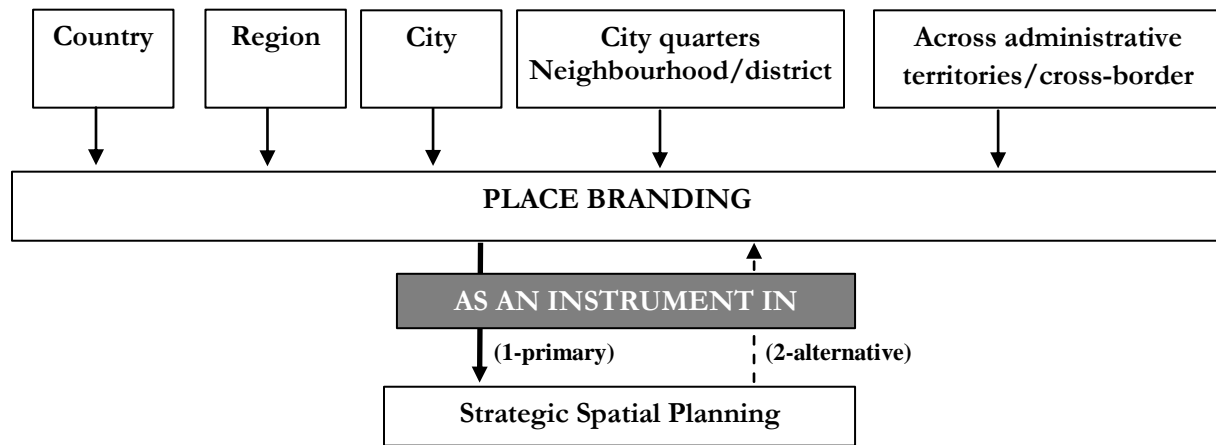
Figure 2.1. Visual conceptualization of the two strands of reasoning (1) and (2) considered in this Ph.D. thesis. *Source*: own elaboration.

Strategic spatial planning focuses on key issue areas (Quinn, 1980) and takes a critical view of the community's environment to determine its strengths and weaknesses in the context of opportunities and threats (Kaufman and Jacobs, 1987). Furthermore, strategic spatial planning also studies the external trends, forces (Poister and Streib, 1999) and resources available (Quinn, 1980), and identifies and engages the main place stakeholders (Bryson and Roering, 1988; Granados-Cabezas, 1995) and communities (Balducci *et al.*, 2011). There is a need for active participation of place actors, either in strategic spatial planning initiatives as well as in place branding. In place branding, stakeholders legitimise place brands and deeply influence their meaning (see about stakeholders' involvement in place branding Kavaratzis, 2012). Hence, this engagement serves as a strategic link between place branding and strategic spatial planning (see Figure 2.2.).

Strategic spatial planning allows for multilevel governance and for a diverse involvement of public, economic and civil entities, and it develops the most realistic, long-term vision and strategies for a place (Healey, 1997a, b; Kunzmann, 2000; Albrechts, 2004). As Hankinson (2007) argues, an efficient place branding process should be developed upon a strong vision, consistent communications across a wide range of stakeholders, and strong and compatible networks. The process of place branding is usually carried out by a "partnership between the public and private sector stakeholders who are involved in the place product delivery" (Hankinson, 2010, p. 19). The authors Hankinson (2007, 2010) and Rainisto (2003) underpin the need for a shared vision among place actors, public and private entities as well as communities, for the future of places that will guide all efforts and for a clear strategy to realise that vision. This kind of vision and strategic analysis also link place branding and strategic spatial planning (see also Figure 2.2.).

Strategic spatial planning takes into account the uncertainties of a place and competing values within that place (Quinn, 1980). It draws plan-making structures and develops content (Mintzberg *et al.*, 1998) images and decision frameworks (Faludi and Van der Valk, 1994). Place branding "can be

the means both for achieving competitive advantage in order to increase inward investment and tourism, but also the means for achieving community development, reinforcing local identity and identification of the citizens" with their place (Kavaratzis and Ashworth, 2010, p. 7). In the line of the arguments of Van Assche and Djanibekov (2012), place branding and spatial planning personify forms of policy integration, and both work as a process to address economic, social and structural challenges. In addition, they can improve spatial qualities, highlight assets and protect the place landscape. From the ideas of Allmendinger and Haughton (2010), following the developments of spatial planning in the United Kingdom, there emerges another possible connection between place branding and strategic spatial planning, in particular when they argue the need for a more flexible and strategic system of planning with objectives that require quicker decisions on proposals, promote economic competitiveness, tackle environmental issues and prioritise previously used land. Place branding shares the common goals of economic competitiveness with the desire to improve quality of life.

The literature intensively touches upon place branding as a process where the rationale must be clear in terms of the nature of the brand that the place wants to become, as well as with whom and why to use branding techniques. It is also important to identify how a place brand can create the mental, psychological and emotional ties to the place. In addition, one must pinpoint the functional, physical attributes that the place needs to create, improve, emphasise or even avoid in a place branding strategy (Ashworth and Kavaratzis, 2010). The line of reasoning here is based on the work of Mintzberg (1994), Ashworth and Kavaratzis (2010), Balducci *et al.* (2011) and Pasqui (2011) to strategically conceptualise place branding as an instrument in strategic spatial planning and develop place branding as process within broader strategic thinking. Place branding through (strategic) spatial planning may lead to a more harmonised place brand steeped in community stories. Furthermore, adding a spatial dimension for place branding initiatives may counterpoise the criticisms that malign the practice as a mode of neo-liberal governance where local politics is pandering to corporate interests and profit making; as opposed to the application of tailored and context sensitive approaches more close to local needs.

A spatial dimension in place branding attempts to take a more realistic view over spatial realities, where identities, assets, qualities and landscape are paramount for spatial development. Although, it is also necessary to empower communities, engage with place actors and improve mechanisms of cooperation as well as embracing a controlled decentralisation of the decision-making process in place branding. Furthermore, flexibility and adaptability to circumstances facilitated through more dynamic styles of spatial planning and place governance could be an advantage when designing place branding strategies.
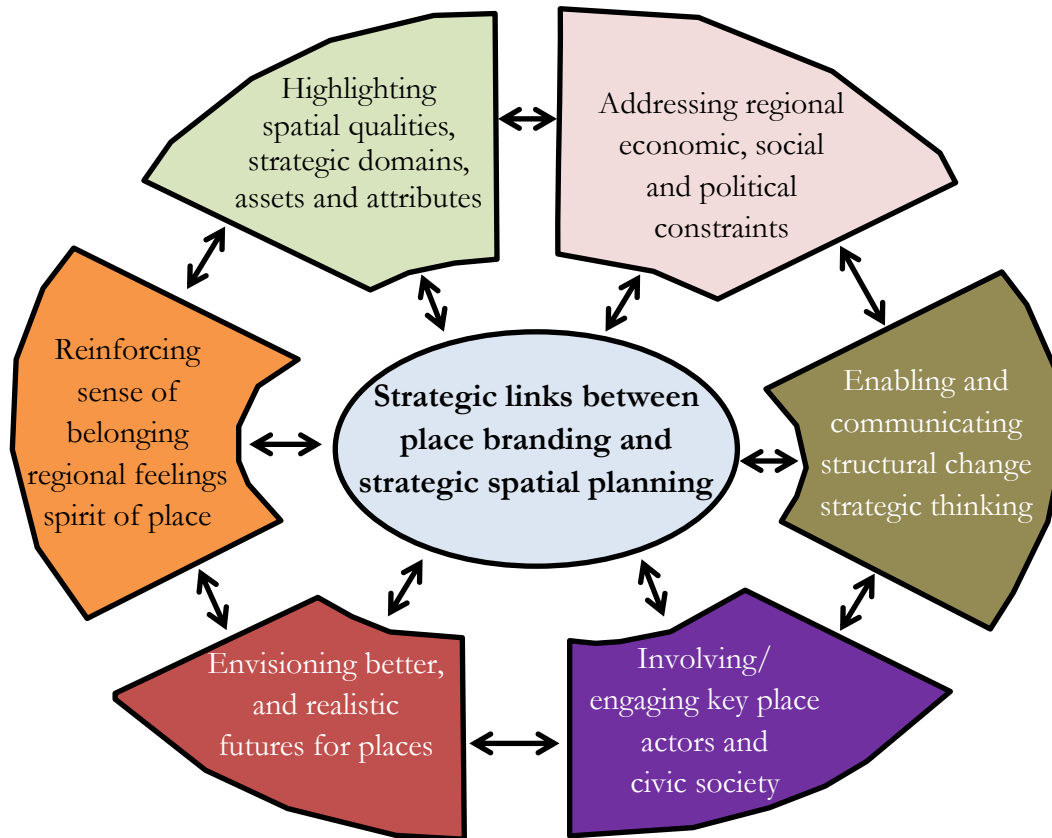
Figure 2.2. Strategic links between place branding and strategic spatial planning. Note: this figure is in line with Figure 1.6. (chapter 1). Figures 1.6. and this one 1.2. are the backbone of the theoretical framework of this study (see Figure 5.1., chapter 5). *Source*: own elaboration.

2.6. Discussing the two strands of reasoning: strategically thinking place branding

Spatial planners are concerned with improving the quality of places. Thus, linking the development of place territories to "major infrastructure investments, thereby reducing spatial injustices; promoting economic opportunities; limiting threats to environmental balances; and working out which aspects of the past to conserve" (Healey, 2009, p. 439). Is important to acknowledge here that from the above list of intentions, spatial planning may select only some of those intensions (strategic spatial planning is selective, this according to Albrechts) while other intentions may be ignored. For that there exist some planning instruments, such as regulatory plans, spatial development strategies and comprehensive plans. However, the complexity of places and the challenges they are facing demand new strategies and creative planning instruments. As place branding has become an increasingly common strategy to seek an advantage in the contemporary competitive environment, an integral part of economic development initiatives (Kavaratzis, 2010) and is also linked to endogenous economic development (Pasquinelli, 2010), it could be one of the new instruments spatial planners are calling for.

Nevertheless, only if place branding is understood as a wider strategic choice for places – which includes a definition of a strategy, involvement and a forward push to motivate all place stakeholders into the branding process and vision – then place branding could be a useful tool for the economic and social development of places (see Ashworth and Kavaratzis, 2010). In both fields of research, strategic spatial planning and place branding, defining a clear vision for a place is fundamental. A vision for the place, a broad strategy able to clarify what the place is and what it aims to become in the long term, together with an exhaustive definition of who will be involved in the process, the financial and human resources, the projects and the creative communication are the "recipe" for successful place branding initiatives (Ashworth and Kavaratzis, 2010). The questions of "why" and "how" to do it remain unexplored. Places need a strategic change to respond to challenges and state the direction of social, economic and equal development (the "why"). Place branding through strategic thinking and in strategic spatial planning could actively engage with place actors and communities, improve place qualities, enhance assets and identity, shed some light on the genius loci (that is, spirit of place) and better communicate with potential investors, tourists, workers, inhabitants and with other place actors (the "how").

Bearing in mind all the aforementioned synergies, the argument is that place branding as a strategic spatial planning instrument could help place actors better prepare their responses to changes at the economic and political level by "zooming in" on places' needs, assets and values. As Albrechts (2010a) argues, a strategic planning approach should be implemented according to the social and cultural values of the place to "which a particular place or society is historically committed" (Albrechts, 2010b, p. 1115). Integrating place branding in strategic spatial planning initiatives could support a structural change, such as image reorientation, repositioning and moving forward to a higher level of social and economic development. Strategic spatial planning also aims to engage communities and develop efforts for their own well-being. As Ashworth and Kavaratzis (2010) state, local communities play a significant role in assuring the success of place branding initiatives. Furthermore, Therkelsen *et al.* (2010) noted that there is a chance to use place branding as a community-building tool, but that this demands more effort and responsibility than contemporary local authorities seem to be willing to put into it. If people feel part of the place branding process, they are more likely to embrace the values of the place as a whole.

As mentioned by Ashworth and Kavaratzis (2010), the immediate desire of practitioners is often to use branding as a fast, cheap, effective and "dreamlike solution" applied to the place weaknesses and their everyday challenges. However, this approach is unlikely to work by itself. It should be integrated in a wider strategy or as an instrument in strategic planning. However, in which cases should place branding be taken as a strategic spatial planning instrument? And in which cases should it be taken in the other way around, that is strategic spatial planning in place branding (the alternative strand of reasoning)?

Table 2.1. is an attempt to provide the necessary theoretical clarifications, with empirical evidence, in terms of when place branding can be taken as strategic spatial planning instrument (primary strand of reasoning) and the cases where the opposite seems more strategically effective for the place (alternative strand of reasoning), either across administrative territories, a country, a region or a city. This chapter emphasises that the "optimal approach" independent of the spatial scale, if

such could ever exist, is place branding through spatial planning to support strategic spatial planning initiatives. However, when deciding on the application of a primary or alternative strand it depends if the "place" has already a place brand or not, and how strong that place brand is.

Place branding as a strategic spatial planning instrument could attempt to develop synergies by structuring place identities and by highlighting place assets putting them together in a unique spatial planning initiative. Those assets are fundamental to enhancing place image and place reputation. In addition, a place branding strategy needs to be embodied through the aims, communication, values, design and the general culture of the place's stakeholders and communities (Zenker and Braun, 2010). Place branding centres on people's perceptions and images, putting them at the heart of orchestrated activities, which are designed to shape the place and its future. Managing the place brand becomes an attempt to influence and treat those mental maps in a way that is deemed favourable to the present circumstances and future needs of the place (Kavaratzis and Ashworth, 2005). Therefore, it is important to establish an appropriate institutional framework for the creation of a cooperative network that can take the branding process forward. When places become aware of their complexity and the competitive and uncertain environment around them, the planning and design of successful spatial strategies is paramount. Therefore, the deployment of innovative strategic spatial planning instruments, in which place branding could emerge, increases in importance and meaning.

Table 2.1. Explicating the two strands of reasoning (primary and alternative).

Spatial scale Across administrative territories / Inter-regional/ Cross-border regions / Country / Region/ City / Neighbourhood / City quarters/districts	Primary strand	Alternative strand
	Place Branding (PB) as a Strategic Spatial Planning (SSP) instrument	**Strategic Spatial Planning (SSP) as an instrument in Place Branding (PB)**
	PB IN SPP	**SPP IN PB**
Place with place branding/ place brand (weak or strong)	If the place has already a place brand and if that place brand is weak, place branding as an instrument IN strategic spatial planning will enhance the place assets, engage stakeholders, as well as communities, in the process, and better support the existent place brand. Place branding through SPP works as value creation for the place and the brand. Barcelona	A place with a strong brand, and strong image, allows for strong planning interventions. Place branding dictates the guidelines for the practice of strategic spatial planning (for example, through strategic projects). Tuscany, in Italy has a strong place brand, with a strong image, and this makes it easier to maintain certain features in the Tuscan landscape. Tuscany can be regarded as a major success

	started the branding process after the design of a strong strategic spatial (urban) plan. The place brand was weak but enhanced when integrated IN strategic plans that follow the 1988 primary plan (see Pareja-Eastway, Chapain and Mugnano, 2013). In Northern Minnesota successful planning strategies improved the quality of the place brand (see Van Assche and Lo, 2011).	of place branding, with connections to spatial planning. Since Renaissance, Tuscan political and intellectual elites strive to create an image of Tuscany as a place of arts and economic and social vitality (see Van Assche and Lo, 2011). The Tuscany brand, despite some criticism because of underplaying some sectors, such as industry, can be given here as an example of vitality essentially because of the stable and unique place branding storyline.
Place without place branding/ place brand	Place branding as an instrument IN strategic spatial planning for places without an ongoing place branding exercise or rebranding process are more likely to achieve success, given the facts stated above, if PB works as SPP instrument. It will be effective in processes of reimagining, repositioning and rescaling. It will attempt to enact structural change and smartly connect physical interventions in the territory with place identity, strategic domains and assets (tangible and intangible).	If places without an ongoing place branding exercise adopt the proposed alternative strand, the place branding exercise is highly risky. It could just start and finish as a place promotional exercise and is unlikely to improve place qualities or contribute to economic and social development. A place brand will also dictate the rules and the financial means in a less sustainable way.
Key remark The optimal approach	The primary strand of reasoning - place branding IN strategic spatial planning as an instrument - is the optimal approach towards a place branding initiative integrated within strategic spatial planning practices.	

2.7. Conclusions

This chapter has assembled a contribution to the place branding debate by elucidating the practice as a strategic spatial planning instrument to better support structural change in places facing major challenges, such as the rising cost of energy, the financial crisis and the subsequent economic crisis, the globalisation of culture, the economy just to enumerate some changes (see Albrechts, 2013, 2010a for more challenges faced by places).

The literature in strategic spatial planning mentioned the mobilisation around the definition of a vision or image for places, where such images are much more than simply a return to the language of strategic urban design or a form of urban marketing (Healey *et al.*, 1999). Place images and visions are used "politically and socially to construct a territorial logic, to share ownership of strategic development ideas, promote territorial cohesion among place stakeholders, and the marketing purpose of positioning the territory externally" (Healey *et al.*, 1999, p. 347). Moreover, strategic spatial planning is defined as "self-conscious collective efforts to reimagine a city, an urban region or a wider territory and to translate the result into priorities for area investment, conservation measures, strategic infrastructure investments and principles of land use regulation" (Healey, 2004, p. 46).

Broadening and deepening the investigation to include international cases would lay the ground for a strategic implementation of place branding as well as a stronger justification of the two strands of reasoning. However, there are only a few studies that link place branding to spatial planning. When investigating three regions, Tuscany, Italy, Missouri and Northern Minnesota, USA, Van Assche and Lo (2011) mentioned that a strong place brand allows for strong planning interventions (the case of Tuscany). In this case, the alternative strand of reasoning could be more effective. In this case place branding will "dictate" the rules in strategic spatial planning and design interventions. As the place brand creates value and gives stability to the place image, spatial planning interventions will be positioned at a lower level or intervention. The place brand works as commander. With the case of Northern Minnesota, the environment landscape was successfully planned for nature and tourism, and the weak Northern Minnesota brand was rebranded through a spatial planning process. This case shows how the primary strand can be effective. However, in this case a new place identity was the background for both spatial planning/spatial design and place branding. A reimagining process through planning reinforced the identity. Stakeholders saw it as more of a value creation instrument than as a means for value destruction. With Missouri, there were fewer place assets, making the brand itself harder to capitalise upon in a strong anti-planning environment (Van Assche and Lo, 2011).

In a recent work, the authors Pareja-Eastway *et al.* (2013) evaluate the branding process across 13 European cities. The case of Barcelona, which started in 1988 with a strategic plan, involved a process of spatial transformation and reorganization. Spatial planning and spatial design were combined, and with the consensus of a variety of actors, long-term strategic planning highly influenced the final outcome of the whole branding exercise. The Barcelona City Council was able, both before the Olympic Games in 1992 and after, to implement assertive strategy making in the urban realm, which reinforced the image of the city as a place for business, tourism, cultural and sportive activities. In addition, the city was branded as an attractive place to live. The city brand has been smartly anchored in strategic urban planning and civic engagement (Pareja-Eastway *et al.*, 2013).

Bearing in mind the evolution of Barcelona's place branding process, the primary strand of reasoning, as proposed in this theoretical framework, enhances the quality of the place. In addition, it is able to introduce structural changes, including physical planning, landscape design and the resilient creation and maintenance of urban fabric and assets.

Balducci *et al.* (2011) devoted attention to Milan and City of Cities Strategic Project, organized by the Provincia di Milano. Among a plethora of objectives, the Strategic Project aimed to build a new place narrative by moving away from the most pervasive of the rhetoric embedded in public discourse (the images associated to Milan, such as Milan the city of fashion, or Milan the city of design). The desire was to describe the contemporary reality of Milan, shedding light not just on structural elements and issues, but also on the city's opportunities, strengths, threats and willingness to accept a strategic change of the urban agenda (Balducci *et al.*, 2011). In this case, the primary strand is likely to be more effective as well.

The primary strand of reasoning – place branding as a strategic spatial planning instrument – is able to replace the traditional planning instruments, and it could be taken in that way when a place has no place brand or is about to initiate a place branding process (or re-branding following the weakness of the place image or brand). Strategic spatial planning interventions that strive for synergies with tailored place branding strategies, with an effective context-sensitive approach to identify unique community values and assets, are likely to craft a more persuasive branding storyline. This, as opposite to universal solutions or actions inspired by pseudo-scientific models that only lead to uniformity or more of the same ("one-size-fits-all" approach). A valuable place brand encourages community cooperation, coordination, long-term strategies (as opposed to task-oriented strategies) and sustainable use of the landscape, while inspiring comprehensive planning (Van Assche and Lo, 2011).

As Ashworth (2005) also asserts, the new spatial planning instruments include ideas of politicisation and spatial planning as a form of two-way communication between those who plan and those who are planned. These instruments would include place branding as it is a form of communication, able to create links of collaboration among place actors, public/private entities and citizens (Ashworth, 2011a). Place branding and strategic spatial planning both aim to engage people with the place, enhancing image and identity. They are both practically oriented to the challenges that really matter. Context is everything, and engagement with communities and place actors, in support of co-creation of the brand, is the way forward. In that regard, place brands have the capability of providing something for everybody, only because and only when everybody creates them. Place branding through strategic spatial planning enhances the needed connectedness among multiple place stakeholders and communities. Place branding will play an important role in communicating a place's structural changes, encouraging strategic visions, providing integration among a range of sectorial and multi-spatial level plans (for example, national, regional and local). In order to supply the reader with some empirical evidence on the theoretical contribution of this chapter, I underline the work of Allan (2012) on the idea of "Experience Masterplanning" developed in 2011 to the *East Renfrewshire Council,* a district unitary authority South-west of the city of Glasgow in the West of Scotland. In my viewpoint, this initiative works as an example on the integration between what a place aims to become: "East Renfrewshire aims to be a place to grow", with a branding strategy: "a

place to grow up in", "a place to develop as a person", "a place to grow a family", "a place to grow a business", "a place to invest in" and "a place to visit" – through a spatial planning intervention in the council area.

Designing a place branding process by linking place branding and strategic spatial planning, in a context of permanent changes, uncertainty and desired transformation, is a challenge in itself and requires continuous research, even at the academic level. A place branding initiative supported by consistent image building, vision, robust strategic thinking and a clear definition of the goals and place objectives, will help stakeholders develop unique and distinct identities. In addition, by establishing a clear and competitive position, highlighting place assets, and bringing together divergent voices into the same branding storyline, stakeholders can develop shared visions for future spatial development.

This chapter takes a necessary step towards a more consistent knowledge and discourse on potential theoretical linkage between place branding and strategic spatial planning. However, this chapter has some limitations. Acknowledging that it is mainly conceptual, it covers most relevant literature on place branding and strategic spatial planning with references to governance and spatial design. However, the chapter lacks empirical data as well as a detailed case study. Therefore, primary research will be necessary to support the framework proposed here. Such research will hopefully clarify the two strands of reasoning for applying place branding and strategic spatial planning together. Furthermore, additional research should attempt to enhance the connections among spatial planning, spatial design and the imaginative power of strategic spatial planning. In addition, this field would benefit from a deeper understanding of the evolution of place governance and how it influences place branding and strategic spatial planning options. The important thing is to keep the conversation going and to design creative strategies to deal with today's spatial challenges. The next chapters - integrated in part B: empirical research - place branding in strategic spatial planning with special reference to northern Portugal - attempt to bridge some of the limitations that have emerged from this chapter.

The next chapter (chapter 3) critically explores the actual or potential roles of place branding as an instrument for the attainment of strategic spatial planning goals through its integration in spatial plan and policy-making. By guiding the attention of academics, practitioners and policymakers towards a strategic spatially oriented approach to place branding, the chapter aims to reinforce the main objective of this thesis by bringing an alternative view to the scholarly and professional debate on place branding.

PART B:

EMPIRICAL RESEARCH - PLACE BRANDING IN STRATEGIC SPATIAL PLANNING WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO NORTHERN PORTUGAL

Chapter 3: Place branding in strategic spatial planning: a content analysis of development plans, strategic initiatives and policy documents for Portugal and its northern region (NUTS II) for the period between 2014 and 2020

Chapter overview

This chapter aims to firstly depict the theoretical links between place branding and strategic spatial planning to provide further theoretical and conceptual foundations. Secondly, it aims to explore the roots of place branding theory and practice in Portugal, as well as how place branding has been approached (or not) in spatial development plans, strategic initiatives and policy documents by stating the territorial, spatial-economic and sectoral development trajectories for the country and its northern region. A content analysis of 20 spatial development plans, strategies and policy documents (of 30 identified), published by Portuguese authorities, the European Union (EU) and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, mainly for the period between 2014 and 2020, has been used. Empirical evidence shows that tourism-oriented promotion initiatives, investment-oriented marketing campaigns and communication strategies uniquely supported by visual elements and aesthetic values (for example logos and slogans) deserve more attention from authorities in charge of spatial planning and policy-making. Place branding is an absent term. Moreover, there is inconsistency between current research and practice on place branding and how it has been incorporated in strategic spatial planning at EU, national and regional levels. Whilst some of the research findings are place-specific (Portugal and its northern region), this exploratory study aims to present a better understanding of the way in which places and branding can be conceptually addressed, primarily by assigning a spatial dimension to the idea of branding places and its alignment with strategic spatial planning and spatial plan-making.

3.1. Introduction

Place-branding literature has been locked into a marketing-led approach as it concerns places and has not been successful in conveying a more strategic approach and spatial consciousness to the process of branding places (Oliveira, 2015a, 2015b following Ashworth, 2011a, 2011b and Van Assche and Low, 2011). Research on strategic spatial planning and strategic spatial plan-making seems to avoid the use of the term "place branding". However, concepts such as place promotion, image building and the definition of competitive strategies can be found in both spatial planning literature and practice. For example, the seminal work of Lynch (1960) serves as an example of image and vision building in the spatial planning literature. Graham and Healey (1999) underline the application of "marketing language" when discussing vision in the spatial plan-making of the *Hampshire County Structure Plan 1996-2011* (HCC, 1996). Later, Healey *et al.* (1999) find more European examples in Lyon (*European Metropolis*), Copenhagen (*European Capital*) Madrid (*Region Metropolitana*), and the Portuguese capital of Lisbon (*Atlantic Capital of Europe*), all of whom have mobilized efforts to construct a vision or image of the future of the territory and to attract foreign investment by integrating these aims in master plans at the city level. According to Healey *et al.* (1999), the purpose of these images was to promote internal coherence among stakeholders, as much as to position the city-territory outwardly (the marketing purpose). Neuman devoted particular attention to the Spanish

capital of Madrid to argue that (spatial) "planners used the evoking image to craft the strategy, implement it, and build the institutions of regional planning and government" (1996, p. 293). Thus, city-images played the role of institution builders and are "key to understanding how planning processes worked" (Neuman, 1996, p. 293). This role of images in Madrid's planning and governance can also be seen in other cities and regions plan and policy-making (for example Barcelona; New Jersey; the Dutch case of Randstad; Copenhagen) (see Neuman, 1996). Arguably, some of these cities have recently developed place marketing and place branding exercises that one could argue have their roots in spatial plans and spatial policy-making.

Despite the definition in the early 1990s of a strategic vision for positioning Lisbon, like other European capital-cities (see Healey *et al.*, 1999; Neuman, 1996), internally, as well as externally, the spatial development plans created after 1994 kept the characteristics of traditional urbanization plans, emphasizing land-use regulation and lacking any strategic guidance in terms of policy-making (Rosa Pires, 2005). Furthermore, spatial planning, at the country (Portugal) and regional levels has been dominated by the blueprint approach and is largely focused on urban planning (Rosa Pires, 2005), as well as land use planning (Ferrão and Mourato, 2011). In addition, there is little theoretical debate on the ideas and the mission of spatial planning in Portugal (Ferrão and Mourato, 2011), and strategic spatial planning is still at an "infancy stage" (Rosa Pires, 2005, p. 237). With a traditional approach to spatial planning, one might expect that place branding will remain far from being integrated in strategic spatial planning or strategic spatial plan-making in Portugal. Moreover, the literature on place branding undertaken in Portugal, using its regions and cities as case studies, remains weak.

In order to accomplish the aims of contributing to the robustness and maturation of place branding theory, methodology and practice, not exclusively in Portugal, as well as to respond to the call Kavaratzis *et al.* (2015) have made to sharpening the associated debates on place branding, this exploratory study, first investigates the theoretical links between place branding and strategic spatial planning. Here, strategic spatial planning is understood as a means of overcoming the temporal and often spatial limitations and rigidities of traditional/statutory planning, by confronting the contemporary social, spatial and economic needs of a place and envisioning better futures (see Albrechts and Balducci, 2013, Balducci *et al.*, 2011). Strategic spatial planning focuses on a limited number of strategic key issues, on place-specific qualities and involves relevant place actors and concrete activities of citizens, politicians and spatial planners. Secondly, the chapter builds empirical evidence regarding how place branding has been approached in spatial development plans, spatial strategy-making and spatial policies for Portugal, with a special focus on its northern region (NUTS II) and for the period coincident with the EU multiannual financial framework 2014 to 2020. Primary data has been gathered exclusively in Portugal, specifically, a content analysis of 20 documents stating the territorial, spatial-economic and sectoral development trajectories for the country and its northern region has been employed.

To contribute to fulfil the main research objective and research questions of this thesis, this chapter will contribute to a better understanding of the way in which places and branding can be conceptually addressed, primarily by bringing a spatial planning dimension to the idea of branding places and its alignment with strategic spatial planning and spatial plan-making. From my

perspective, place branding and strategic spatial planning are interwoven, and spatial planners can play a core role in the design of branding strategies by integrating them into strategic spatial planning.

By guiding the attention of academics, policy makers and practitioners in the direction of a spatially-oriented approach to place branding, the chapter reinforces the primary strand of reasoning of this thesis and also provides an alternative approach to the scholarly and professional debate on place branding beyond Portugal and its northern region.

3.2. Place branding in strategic spatial planning: some theoretical considerations

Despite its limitations when applied to place management - corporate branding has paved the way for more sophisticated understandings of place branding (see, for example, Ashworth, 2005; Hankinson, 2010; Kavaratzis and Hatch, 2013; Skinner, 2008), it follows that research on strategic spatial planning can also contribute to the robustness of the place branding literature (see, for example, Metaxas, 2009; Rizzi and Dioli, 2010).

According to Ashworth and Voogd (1990), the idea of marketing and more recently, branding places, involves not only promotional measures, but also spatial-functional, organizational and financial measures that are meant to improve places and facilitate place management interventions. Taking the same line of reasoning, Kavaratzis and Ashworth (2005) examine the self-conscious application of branding to places as an instrument of urban planning and management. In a recent study, Oliveira (2015a) debates place branding as an instrument of strategic spatial planning, while Giovanardi (2015) draws on the work of Healey (2006b) to discuss convincingly that the conceptualization of place branding is supported by the relational complexity approach to strategic spatial planning. In research focused on the Italian cities of Turin, Genoa, Venice and Piacenza, Rizzi and Dioli (2010) argue that place marketing and place (city) branding are likely to be more successful when developed within the framework of strategic (urban) planning. Moreover, Sartorio (2005) states that strategic spatial plans directly support urban marketing.

Strategic spatial planning is selective and oriented to spatial challenges - challenges that really matter in day-to-day life. Strategic spatial planning is, thus, perceived as a way to overcome the limitations of traditional spatial planning instruments and envision, in an innovative and creative way, better futures for places. Spatial strategy making implies the combination of long-term decisions with short-term actions. In addition, much of the process lies in making the tough decisions about what is most important for the goal of producing fair, equitable structural responses to problems, challenges, aspirations and diversity (Albrechts and Balducci, 2013). As Albrechts (2013) clarifies, strategic spatial planning is "a transformative and integrative public sector, co-productive, socio-spatial process through which visions or frames of reference, the justification for coherent actions and the means for implementation are produced. These shape, frame and reframe what a place is and what it might become" (Albrechts, 2013, p. 52).

Arguably, strategic spatial planning refers to combining increased governmental coordination with democratic participation in spatial planning (Kalliomäki, 2015). Drawing on Kavaratzis (2012), there is an urgent need to rethink place branding towards a more participation-oriented practice, which can be achieved if integrated within wider strategic spatial planning interventions. Furthermore, alongside the idea of strategic spatial planning comes the concept of multilevel

governance (Albrechts *et al.*, 2003), which encompasses cooperation, the elaboration of a mutually beneficial dialectic between top-down structural developments and bottom-up local uniqueness (Albrechts, 2004). According to Eshuis and Edwards (2013), Klijn *et al.* (2012), Peel and Lloyd (2008), place branding has become part of place-specific governance strategies aimed at enhancing place images and managing perceptions regarding places. Neuman (1996) argues that place images have been used as tools for institution building. For example, New York City has integrated place marketing in urban governance (Greenberg, 2008). Drawing on Healey *et al.* (1999, p. 339), strategic spatial plan-making can be seen as playing a role in developing institutional territorial integration and re-invigorating territorial identities, which arguably should be supported by local governance.

Researchers of place branding agree that it is undoubtedly a multi- and cross-disciplinary field of studies (see, for example, Hankinson, 2010; Lucarelli and Berg, 2011). Furthermore, Kavaratzis and Ashworth (2008) highlights that the process of branding places also requires more than advertising or communication strategies; it involves spatial planning and spatial design to influence the physical appearance of the place. Despite some theoretical developments that link place branding and the spatial planning discipline, only a few place-branding initiatives have moved beyond the use of new logos and slogans which are not then reflected in new patterns of economic activity, spatial transformation, governmental structures or local identification. Braun *et al.* (2014), in line with Kavaratzis (2004, 2008), argue that place branding encompasses much more than logos, catchphrases and propaganda. In addition, place branding is not about brand-making, place promotion or marketing tasks only, but rather a combination of disciplines such as spatial planning, urban sociology and economic geography (Eshuis *et al.*, 2014).

Drawing on the work of Hanna and Rowley (2008) in the analysis of the terminology used in place branding research, "spatial planning" and "strategic spatial planning" are not mentioned in 59 articles analysed, nor is the integration of place branding in strategic planning or strategic spatial plan-making.

In line with Eshuis *et al.* (2014), Ashworth (2011a) and Van Assche and Lo (2011) note that place branding is more effective when integrated within a wider intervention for the place and when synergistically combined with planning and spatial design interventions. In addition, Van Assche and Lo (2011) state that place branding includes a wide range of issues and reaches close to research concerning governance and spatial planning, and requires civic and stakeholder engagement. According to Van Dijk and Holstein, "branding turns the traditional planning world upside down, by taking the perspectives and experiences of residents as a starting point" (2007, p.14). An example of civic participation in place branding might be useful here. In a recent study, Eshuis *et al.* (2014) analysed the case of Katendrecht, a Dutch community in the southern part of Rotterdam, as part of their research on citizen involvement in place branding. The authors concluded that in the branding process of Katendrecht, citizen participation was possible and that place branding can influence wider urban policies, such as spatial planning and urban restructuring. Furthermore, place branding can influence spatial planning and urban restructuring. In addition, Oliveira (2015a) underlines that place branding via strategic spatial planning enhances the necessary connectedness among multiple place actors, organizations and communities. Pasquinelli (2014) debates a theoretical platform

representing branding as the process of collective strategy-making in an urban context, which implies a high level of civic engagement with the process.

Several aspects have characterized these changes in policy discourse, which places emphasis on positioning for economic competitiveness, collaborative processes (to construct territorial logic) and the stronger promotion of territorial identities, in which strategic spatial planning plays a crucial role (Faludi, 1996; Forester, 1989; Healey *et al.*, 1999). The definition of visions, images and dealing with positioning are viable strategies for branding places (Gertner and Kotler, 2004; Hankinson, 2010; Pasquinelli 2010). In addition, stakeholder/community participation in both strategic spatial plan-making and place branding are paramount. Bearing in mind that place branding is a non-linear process (Pasquinelli, 2010), a participative-oriented place branding process is a key driver for successful place branding (Van Assche and Lo, 2011; Zenker, 2014). An example might illustrate this assumption more clearly. In March 2008, Mayor Wowereit of Berlin, publicly launched a city campaign using the slogan "*be Berlin*" (*sei Berlin*). The campaign was analysed by Colomb and Kalandides (2010) as being somewhere between a potential innovative participative oriented place branding process and a simple reframing of old interventions. Berliners actively participated in the construction of the city brand. In addition, the campaign sought to encourage the construction of strategic alliances among the city's institutional players and other key stakeholders (Colomb and Kalandides, 2010).

Turning the focus of this chapter to Portugal, and the lack of conceptual research concerning place branding at the country and regional levels, I draw on work developed by Pike, who in 2002 conducted a detailed review of 142 destination image papers published in international journals between 1973 and 2000 (Pike, 2002). This review was conducted to provide destination image researchers with a reference guide of previous studies in the field, none of whom had taken Portugal or its regions as case studies. Six years later, Hanna and Rowley (2008) analysed the content of 67 case-study papers published in 12 academic journals in the field of place branding. In their analysis, too, Portugal is absent as a case. In an article published in 2011, Lucarelli and Berg identified 217 qualified research studies on city branding. These studies were examined, analysed and classified according to six categories: bibliographical data; methodologies used; empirical foundation; conceptual frameworks; branding elements; reported outcomes of branding efforts.

The city of Faro in the southern part of the country (Algarve region) was the only Portuguese region to feature in a study devoting attention to place (city level) branding. This fact could be justified for two reasons: first, Faro is the capital of Algarve, a tourism region; secondly, because place branding was seen as especially relevant for increasing tourism revenues, investment and tourists. Recently, Chan and Marafa (2013), in an analysis of 55 studies dedicated to place branding, identified an article by Freire (2009) which devoted attention to the Algarve region. The same publication has previously been identified in a meticulous analysis by Lucarelli and Berg (2011).

Though there are a few mentions of Portuguese regions and cities, there remains a shortage of academic research in the field of place branding which focus upon Portugal and especially its northern part, as an empirical case. The following section provides an overview of the roots of place branding in Portugal.

3.3. From place promotion to place branding with special reference to Portugal and its northern region

The genesis of place promotion in Portugal can be traced back to 1906 and the foundation of the Portuguese Society of Propaganda (PSP) – an initiative of a group of people and the business sector, such as hotel owners (Pina, 1988). The journalist Leonildo de Mendonça e Costa decided to take the initiative of the creation of the PSP. Together with a group of 73 persons the SPP was funded with the purpose of using tourism to help Portugal to overcome a deep social and economic crisis (Cunha, 2010). The goals of this now defunct society were to promote, by its own actions or in cooperation with public authorities and local governments, all the tangible and intangible elements of Portugal and its regions to both the domestic and international markets. In addition, the society was in charge of establishing ties with international entities in order to attract visitors (Costa and Vieira, 2014). According to Pina (1988), the Portuguese Society of Propaganda can be seen as the first action of Portugal's marketing abroad and which extensively advertised the country as "the shortest way between America and Europe. It may be of interest to note that one of the preoccupations of the PSP had been spatial planning at the country level. For example, the PSP developed efforts to improve the port of Lisbon and the modification of boarding fees, as well as the facilitation of border controls. I acknowledge the limitation of this descriptive piece on the role of the PSP, as I was not able to find and analyse whether these spatial transformation practices had been planned and/or integrated within wider spatial planning or within a strategic spatial plan, as the literature does not state this clearly. Additionally, the PSP sought to promote the establishment of a daily *Sud-Express* train connection (the *Sud-Express* is a night train that originally connected Paris and Lisbon, but which now traverses only the southern part of the original route) and the organization of a practical guide to the State Railways network (Matos and Santos, 2010).

In 1911, the Portuguese Government decided to create its first national tourism organization, the Tourism Bureau. According to Pina (1988) Portugal was among the first nations in the world to embark, since 1911, on the governmental institutionalization of tourism, along with Austria and France, pioneers in the field. The Portuguese tourism bureau can be considered the genesis of tourism planning and management in the country, as well as a continuous country promotional effort. Two comparative cases from southern Europe may be useful to note here. For example, the roots of tourism-oriented promotion in Spain dates back to the travellers of the enlightenment period during the 19th century, marginally earlier than the Portuguese case, whose journeys were motivated by an interest in exploring wild places (Baidal, 2014). Hydrotherapy treatments, or seaside holidays, were also promoted. Mass tourism in Spain experienced a boom during the 1960s and the first half of the 1970s. Nowadays, with a decentralized approach to tourism policy and planning, including place marketing and branding, Spanish national, regional and local tourism planning is integrated within economic planning (national), environmental and territorial instruments (regional) and in spatial (urban) planning (local) (for more detail, see Baidal, 2014). Other European examples of historical roots regarding place promotion, marketing and branding can be found in Costa *et al.* (2014).

Another comparative case - Italy, where the first attempts to promote the country for tourism purposes has its precedents in the classic Roman era, when Romans travelled to enjoy mud baths and

thermal waters. Nevertheless, the tourism phenomenon gained momentum after the 17th century, when Italy became a destination for the British aristocracy. The first Tourism Law in Italy was enacted in 1910. In 1919, the Italian National Body for the Development of the Tourism Industry was established, slightly later than in Portugal.

In 1911, Lisbon hosted the fourth international tourism congress (Tourism of Portugal, 2014). In 1916, while World War I was taking place in central Europe, the first issue of the *Tourism Magazine*, a biweekly publication, written in Portuguese, on tourism, promotion, travel, navigation, art and literature was released, which emphasized the role of the port of Lisbon for the tourism sector in the country – the first issue was releases on July 5, 1916 (see Hemeroteca digital/Lisbon Municipality, n/year). By the mid-1930s, Portugal's tourism planning and promotion at the municipal level comprised 83 tourism entities, coordinated by the *Tourism Bureau*. Between 1930 and 1974, several tourism campaigns were launched, aimed at promoting Portuguese cities (for example Viana do Castelo, Figueira da Foz, Évora, Aveiro), as well as the country and its geographical position. In 1930, urban planning in Portugal began and centred on the production and regulation of urban land (Ferrão and Mourato, 2011). This historical piece on the tourism development in Portugal must be linked to the political environment that characterised Portugal between 1926 and 1974 as well as the "war-scenario" installed in Spain between 1936 and 1939 and the two world wars in Central Europe. Between 1926 and 1974 Portugal was governed by a corporatist authoritarian regime. However, this regime gave a considerable good support to the tourism sector and national propaganda. The fact that Spain faced a civil war between 1936 and 1939 also benefit the tourism sector in Portugal (see Pina, 1988).

In 1986, the Portuguese *Tourism Bureau* launched a place promotional campaign (published in *Conde Nast Traveller* magazine) to advertise that it had much more to offer to potential visitors than just a "sea, sun and sand" holiday (Avraham and Ketter, 2008). The campaign advertised the typical image of Portugal as a tourist destination of golden, bright and sunny beaches under the headline: "One view of Portugal", together with "Another view of Portugal", which highlighted the diverse landscapes found across the country, the nightlife and a variety of arts and thermal attractions, all in order to boost the country's image and attract more visitors. The campaign, twelve years after the Carnation Revolution, a military coup on 25 of April 1974 that ended nearly 50 years of dictatorship, was aimed at changing perceptions of Portugal as backward and underdeveloped.

In 1989, Lisbon, the Portuguese capital, had been a pioneer in the strengthening of its image through the definition of a particular vision and a positioning strategy for placing itself as one of the cities in the world offering its citizens the best quality of life available. This image-building and city-positioning process was integrated in the Lisbon master plan for the period 1989 to 1994. The image of Lisbon as an *Atlantic Capital of Europe* has been successful as an urban marketing tool aimed at attracting more inhabitants, more business and jobs, in stimulating urban rehabilitation and improving public spaces. In addition, Healey *et al.* (1999) highlight Lisbon as a prominent example of multiple levels of governance being brought together to create institutional opportunities and infuse strategic and coordinated municipal action. This change in urban planning practice seen in the Portuguese case reflects a change in policy agendas throughout Europe.

In order to provide a more solid view of place branding roots in Portugal and its northern region, I was able to isolate a handful of cases. Figure 3.1. presents these in chronological order. For example, Kotler *et al.* (1999) associated Portugal with five images, although is not clear to me the basis for this selection of images:

(1) Port Wine;
(2) The legend of the Rooster of the northern Portuguese city of Barcelos;
(3) The Portuguese capital of Lisbon;
(4) Portuguese navigators and their discoveries across the oceans;
(5) The southern region of Algarve.
   Source: Kotler *et al.* (1999).

Kastenholz (2002) investigated the marketing implications of a destination image on tourist behaviour by taking northern Portugal as a case study. Azevedo (2004) devoted attention to the knowledge transfer from product branding to place (city) branding as it applied to the Portuguese city of Marinha Grande. Later, Azevedo *et al.* (2010) employed a holistic and customer-oriented approach to the concept of city marketing. One year later, João Freire dedicated particular attention to the challenges and difficulties of branding Lisbon, the Portuguese capital (Freire, 2011). Recently, Azevedo *et al.* (2013) focused on the measurement of place attachment, self-esteem, self-efficacy and perceived happiness in order to provide policy makers with performance indicators for place marketing strategies. Concisely, the abovementioned literature mainly focuses on place marketing, particularly at the city level, as well as on destination image.

A specific focus on place branding emerges in work developed by García *et al.* (2013). In this study, a branding process for the River Minho estuary, on the borderland of northern Portugal and the Spanish autonomous community of Galicia, investigates the tensions between creating a place brand, enhancing market development and securing endogenous progress. In addition, their article contributes to a deeper understanding on how place branding – as a means for creating place distinctiveness and attractiveness – can be combined with a sustainable endogenous development approach in vulnerable peripheral areas. In addition, the authors have explored how such an approach to place branding can be fitted to the objectives of sustainability, inclusiveness and smart growth noted in the Europe 2020 Strategy - the EU's strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth (European Union, 2010). Recently, Bloom Consulting, a consultant company based in Madrid, released the Bloom Consulting Portugal City Brand Ranking (Bloom Consulting, 2014), which contributes to the cacophony of place brand rankings but does not add much intellectual substance to the theory or practice thereof (see, for example Sevin, 2014 for a detailed analysis of current place branding measurement scales and indices).

Lisbon

Atlantic Capital of Europe

Portugal

Country assets, Lisbon and Algarve highlighted

Northern Portugal

Destination images of tourist behaviour

Marinha Grande city

Product branding approach to city branding

Portugal

One view of Portugal vs. Another view of Portugal

Portuguese cities

City marketing case studies

Minho River estuary Portugal

Place branding vs. rural

Northern Portugal

Strategic spatial planning, regional branding

1906 — 1999 — 2003 — 2004 — 2008 — 2010 — 2013 — 2014

Healey *et al.* (1999)

Kotler *et al.* (1999)

Kastenholz (2003)

Azevedo (2004)

Avraham and Ketter

Azevedo *et al.* (2010)

García *et al.* (2013)

Oliveira (2014a)

Foundation of the *Portuguese Society of Propaganda*

2007

2013

*Choose Portugal****
(Aicep Portugal global*)

1907

Portugal, the shortest way between America and Europe

2011

*Porto and The North - The essence of Portugal****
(Tourism of Porto and Northern Portugal*)

1916

*Portugal - The beauty of Simplicity****
(Tourism of Portugal*)

1st issue of the Portuguese *Tourism Magazine*

*Brand Portugal****
(Portuguese Government*)

2012

*Portugal Economy Probe - PE Probe***

Figure 3.1. From place promotion to place branding in Portugal between 1906 and 2014.
Source: own elaboration.

——— Academic developments.
- - - - Public institution***** / network of companies and organizations****** / ******* ongoing initiative.

From a practitioner and public policy-making point of view, there have been other attempts at enhancing the position of the country as an investment destination (for example *Choose Portugal*) and as a tourist destination (for example *Destination Portugal – The Beauty of Simplicity*). These place promotion initiatives have been developed by a partnership of private entities (for example *Portugal Economy Probe, PEProbe*), governmental agencies (for example *Agency for Investment and Foreign Trade of Portugal*) and ministries (for example *Secretary of State of Tourism of the Portuguese Ministry of Economy*). Figure 3.1. provides a summary of the branding attempts in Portugal at national, regional and city levels, as well as the academic studies that were traced during the preparation stage of the present Chapter. All of the aforementioned works adopted a marketing - and corporate branding-oriented

approach to the process of marketing Portugal and its regions, and to a lesser extent also employed design branding strategies.

The relevance of a few other studies can be added here. For example, Oliveira (2014a) explores regional branding by taking northern Portugal as an empirical case. The Euro-region Galicia-northern Portugal also deserves special attention from scholars and practitioners. Gutierrez (2013) explores the competencies and capabilities of the Euro-region Galicia-northern Portugal and its integration in a potential joint inter-regional marketing plan, while Oliveira (2014b, 2015e) adopts a strategic spatial planning approach to a potential cross-border branding strategy for the same Euro-region Galicia-northern of Portugal, and the role of the European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC) to implement and operationalize it.

The detailed review presented here primarily emphasizes academic sources and the ongoing place promotion initiatives and place marketing campaigns undertaken by Portuguese institutions. However, the aim of the current research cannot be completed without an exhaustive analysis of how place branding has been approached within spatial plans and strategic frameworks. These will be discussed in the empirical analysis below.

3.4. Research methodology

As stated earlier, and in line with previous studies on branding and with reference to Portugal (see Oliveira, 2014a; Oliveira and Panyik, 2015) a qualitative method is employed. The principal purpose of this research is to obtain in-depth understanding of how place branding has been approached (or not) in spatial development plans, strategic initiatives and policy documents prepared to give spatial and sectoral guidance to Portuguese authorities. Specifically, a content analysis was conducted on 20 spatial development plans, strategies and policy documents (out of 30 identified), published by Portuguese authorities, the EU and the OECD, mainly for the period between 2014 and 2020. Whereas a mixed method would be fruitful for generalising the findings to other geographical contexts, its application was beyond of the scope of this study.

3.4.1. Content analysis of spatial development plans, strategic initiatives and policy documents

The content analysis methodology is a form of scientific inquiry that has commonly been regarded as a useful method for social science research, especially in the area of consumer brand relationships (Fetscherin and Heinrich, 2015). This method, often grouped under the term "discourse analysis", has been applied to analyse qualitative or textual forms of data such as written documents (for example development plans) or visual materials (for example photographs, videos; see Hannam and Knox, 2005; Singh, *et al.*, 2007). In addition, content analysis has been used in several studies to analyse research articles in tourism management and destination image research (see, for example, Govers *et al.*, 2007).

Hanna and Rowley (2008) employ content analysis within numerous articles published in a variety of academic journals with the aim of depicting place brand terms and their geographical dimensions. A few years later, Chan and Marafa (2013) identified in their review paper 17 papers (20.7 per cent of the total) employing document content analysis on place identity (Hudson and

Hawkins, 2006), place image (Nobili, 2005) and place creation/altering (Syssner, 2010). However, these analyses do not explore branding attempts in strategic spatial planning, spatial plans or strategic or policy documents.

To shed light on how place brands and place branding have been integrated, described and narrated (or not) in 20 spatial development plans, strategic initiatives and policy documents stating the territorial, spatial-economic and sectoral development trajectories for Portugal and its northern region were analysed (Table 3.1.). The period for this analysis is coincident with the EU financial framework 2014 to 2020. These documents have been suggested by key national and regional actors during in-depth interviews conducted by the author between December 2013 and September 2014.

Table 3.1. List of documents' content analysed.

ID*	Title
National level: Portugal	
1	The Programme of the XIX Constitutional Government 2011-2015
2	The Road to Growth: A Medium Term-Reform Strategy for Portugal 2014-2020
3	Portugal 2020
4	National Strategy for Research, Innovation and Smart Specialization 2014-2020
5	National Strategic Framework: Operational Competitiveness Programme 2014-2020
6	National Strategic Framework: Clusters and Competitiveness and Technology Poles 2014-2020
7	Smart Cities Portugal – A Sustainable and Competitive Network
8	Portugal Economy Probe Portugal
9	Portugal Global – Choose Portugal (Portugal Basic Data)
10	Portugal, business by the sea – Portugal, Europe's West Coast
11	Territorial Planning and Urbanism Act (LBPOTU)
12	National Spatial Planning Policy Programme (PNPOT) Action Programme and Report
13	The National Strategic Plan for Tourism (Revised version) 2013-2015
Regional level: Northern Portugal	
14	Northern Portugal Strategic Guidelines/Operational Programme 2014-2020
15	Northern Portugal Smart Specialization Strategy 2014-2020
Inter-regional level: European region Galicia-northern Portugal	
16	Euro-region 2020 Project 2014-2020
17	Two Countries – One Destination
18	Joint Investment Programme Galicia-northern Portugal 2014-2020
Supra-national level: EU and the OECD	
19	Portugal: Reforming the state to promote growth
20	Europe 2020 Strategy: Portugal-specific recommendations 2014-2020

Source: own elaboration based on the sources provided in appendix E, page 242. * ID assigned by the author to facilitate the analysis.

3.4.2. Method

To guarantee that the present research is timely and up to date, the content analysis was conducted in December 2014 and reviewed in January 2015 using a process as follows:

(1) Downloading the latest versions of the documents as PDF files from their original sources (see appendix E, page 242 for the full list of documents and their sources);
(2) By using the command "find", the 20 documents were scanned page after page to extract:
    a. the section;
    b. the paragraph;
    c. the sentence in which the words and terms listed in Table 3.2. are noted (based on Hanna and Rowley, 2011).
(3) Table 3.3. was elaborated to enable a concise and direct analysis by touching on not only the words identified, but also the context from which they emerged. This was based on Syssner's notions of *spatial anchorage* and *spatial positioning* (see Syssner, 2010), as well as the latest place branding literature (for example Daspit and Zavattaro, 2014; Eshuis, *et al.*, 2014; Eugenio-Vela and Barniol-Carcasona, 2015; Kavaratzis, *et al.*, 2015; Zenker and Erfgen, 2014). A summary of findings are presented below.

Table 3.2. Words and terms searched.

Applied when the document was written in Portuguese	Applied when the document was written in English
Marca	Brand
Marca + Marca territorial (*)	Place (**) Branding
Marketing + Marketing territorial	Place (**) Marketing
Promoção + Promoção territorial (*)	Place (**) Promotion
Promoção + Promoção sectoral (***)	Sectoral Place Promotion (****)

Source: own elaboration.

*Portugal, regiões, cidades, transfronteiriço, destino. **Country, regions, cities, cross-border, destination. ***Industria, Turismo, Saúde, Serviços. ****Industry, Tourism, Healthy, Culture, Services.

3.5. Research findings

As an alternative to an exhaustive description of the content of the analysed documents, I instead engaged with the documents that mentioned branding, marketing and promotional intent within the country (Portugal) and at regional levels (northern region). Whenever possible, links to the aforementioned literature are provided.

The Programme of the XIX Constitutional Government (ID 1) mirrors the territorial and sectoral disintegration and disorganization in Portugal. Prepared for the timeframe 2011 to 2015 (following the country's political cycle), this political document clearly states the dire need to "promote in a coordinated manner the brand Portugal" to both the domestic and foreign markets (ID 1, p. 36, 52, 105, 106). However, this call to "promote" the "brand Portugal" has been neglected

in follow up documents, that is, The Road to Growth: A Medium Term-Reform Strategy for Portugal (2) and Portugal 2020 (ID 3). Further evidence of this disregard is that ID 1 does not mention the national flagship destination brand – Destination Portugal – the beauty of simplicity. Meanwhile, the ID 2 requests a structural revision of the destination marketing initiatives at the country level, but The National Strategic Plan for Tourism (ID 13) takes at the heart of its promotional vectors the initiative Destination Portugal. Tourism-oriented place promotions are included in the strategic plan for tourism (ID 13), yet it still lacks integration in terms of the core attempt to do serious branding around Destination Portugal, thereby denoting a clear absence of strategy; in line with the conclusions of Oliveira (2014a).

Throughout the analysis, the miscellanea of branding intentions emerged. The same ID 13 proposes the creation of another "brand" for the product, that is, military tourism (p. 60) – without any clarification about the "content" of military tourism. From my perspective, this suggestion of designing another "brand" gives rise to misunderstandings. According to Hankinson (2010), creating additional brands for each segment can lead to market confusion and the dilution of the brand's impact. These documents underline the key national "strategic" sectors, albeit in an incongruent mode. Furthermore, there is an absence of mechanisms for operationalizing the place promotion measures identified. A lack of institutional coordination and organization to implement processes is an obstacle blocking spatial transformation. At this level, Van den Berg and Braun (1999) argue that organizing capacity has become indispensable in any place marketing strategy. In fact, Portuguese regions, administrated by regional coordination and development commissions, do not hold decision-making powers to determine their own strategic path in which to follow their own knowledge about the region they administrate. This has impacts on spatial planning and branding intentions, as this analysis clearly highlights. For example, the ID 13 does not refer to the flagship brand for northern Portugal, that is, "Porto and the North – The essence of Portugal".

The documents produced at the supra-national level (that is, OECD-ID19; EU-ID 20) are spatial-economic plans that are essentially focused on boosting the Portuguese economy, making it more competitive and creating new employment opportunities in areas such as tourism and industry (ID 19, p.25; ID 20, recommendation number 2).

The branding attempts developed by European Grouping for Territorial Cooperation (EGTC) and the Eixo Atlántico (ID 16, 17, 18) presents more "brand substance" and are articulated with the wider strategy. The documents ID 16, 17, 18 appear to propose the common point of constructing a regional advantage at the Euro-region Galicia-northern Portugal level; for example, the Euro-region smart specialization agenda (ID 16), joint tourism-oriented promotional strategies have been identified (ID 17), as well and a Joint Investment Programme Galicia-northern Portugal 2014-2020 (ID 18). This represents an alternative mode of governance to the one followed in Portugal. Several cooperation mechanisms have been activated and links for cross-border knowledge exchange established (for example synergies between universities and enterprises). These documents widen the gap between those produced at the national level (ID 1-13) and those produced at the supra-national level (ID 19, 20), as they stand beyond the assumption of spatial competition and economic growth by illuminating cooperation among the public and private sectors across administrative borders (Portugal and Spain). Of paramount importance to note is that, cooperation and coopetition are

viable strategies for branding places (Pasquinelli, 2013). Among the 20 documents analysed, the Joint Investment Programme Galicia-northern Portugal 2014-2020 (ID 18) is a pioneering example, as it presents a programme for supporting investment attraction based on place marketing and financial mechanisms (p. 66). Even though place branding is not mentioned in the document, place marketing has been integrated with the investment plan. Table 3.3. summarizes the content analysis of the document.

Table 3.3. Place branding and related terms INTERNAL (brand attempt/place marketing and place promotion) or EXTERNAL (no significant finding*) to the analysed documents.

ID	Brand	Place Branding	Place Marketing Destination Marketing	Place Promotion Sectorial Promotion
National level: Portugal				
1	Brand Portugal	No*	No*	No*
2	No*	No*	Implement a structural revision of the destination marketing initiatives at the country level.	Promote investment in the agricultural, agro-industry and forestry sectors.
3	No*	No*	No*	Promote the attraction of foreign investment (sector not specified), talent and a skilful labour force. Reinforce the competitive position of the Portuguese market.
4	No*	No*	No*	No*
5	No*	No*	No*	No*
6	No*	No*	No*	No*
7	No*	No*	No*	No*
8	PE Probe Portugal	No*	No*	Provide information, about (1) study; (2) research and development; (3) investment; (4) tourism in Portugal.
9	Choose Portugal	No*	No*	Encourage foreign companies to invest in Portugal and to contribute to the success of Portuguese companies abroad.

10	**Portugal, business by the sea - Portugal, Europe's West Coast**	No*	No*	Support the attraction of visitors, investors, talent and a skilful labour force.
11	No*	No*	No*	Promote the diversity of the national territory, as well as its quality of life. Ensure conditions to the development of economic, social and cultural activities.
12	No*	No*	No*	Promote the Portuguese economy, making it more competitive with a handful of interventions regarding transportation and mobility.
13	**Destination Portugal and Taste Portugal**	No*	Enhance the image of Portugal as a tourist destination.	Design tourism-oriented promotional campaigns. Design a brand for military tourism.
Regional level: Northern Portugal				
14	No*	No*	Design international marketing strategies to promote and give visibility to northern Portugal	Promote regional economy. Support exports and the internationalization of small and medium enterprises.
15	No*	No*	No*	No*
Inter-regional level: Euro-region Galicia-northern Portugal				
16	No*	No*	No*	Promote competitiveness of the Euro-region Galicia-northern Portugal. Reinforce tourism as a strategic sector for both sides of the border.
17	**Two countries one destination**	No*	No*	Design joint tourism-oriented promotional strategies.
18	No*	Design a unique brand to enhance the image	Create and operationalize place-marketing strategies for investment attraction (p. 66).	Develop joint tourism-oriented promotional strategies. Instigate cooperation in the tourism sector and in the areas of

	of the Euro-region.			smart specialization defined in each ID15 (for example sea economy; Port wine; pilgrimage).
Supra-national level: EU and OECD				
19	**No***	**No***	**No***	Promote and maintain the investment on eco-innovations in textiles, ceramics, aeronautics, waste management and electricity distribution.
20	**No***	**No***	**No***	Promote employment and competitiveness (recommendation number 2).

Source: own elaboration.

3.6. Discussion and reflections

In summary, for the most part, the documents are economic-oriented, aimed at boosting the national economy and competitiveness (for example ID 3, 19 and 20), as well as economic growth (ID 2). Spatial planning is technically addressed in two documents (ID 11, 12). The smart specialization agenda is analysed in three other documents (ID 4, 7, 15). Tourism planning and development (for example ID 13, 17) and investment attraction (for example ID 8, 9, 10) also receive attention. I acknowledge that not all the analysed documents fit the definition of spatial development plans or strategic spatial plans, as stated in Albrechts (2006). For instance, several of the plans identified remain too much of "an administrative framework" (for example ID 5, 6) for development, instead of a truly "proactive plan" aimed at designing the future and implementing it. In addition, the documents seems to "religiously" follow the European Union guidelines that have been locked into the framework projected for 2020, which can be criticized as being strategically weak. There is in Portugal no single strategic planning document unambiguously expressing a clear consensual vision of the future and illustrating the means for rendering it manifest. This is reflected in how brands and place branding are approached. The references to place branding emerged out of the clutter without clear links to the built environment, spatial regeneration or spatial planning strategies.

In light of the recent theoretical developments in place branding, as previously noted (see chapter 1 and 2), the branding intentions identified are far from being place-branding initiatives. Six documents, out of the 20 analysed (30 per cent of the total) clearly refer to *marca*/brand. However, these "brands" have single and isolated branding intentions that are removed from the core aims of the documents and are excessively underpinned by the communication of aesthetic values, for example a brand logo and slogan. Several commentators have repeatedly claimed the relative insignificance of logos and slogans in place branding (see, for example, Govers, 2013). In addition, these branding attempts lack strategic orientation (there is no attempt to envision shared futures for Portugal as a whole, or just the northern part). Primarily, the documents target investment attraction

and visitors at the spatial scale of the country. It has been asserted that place branding entails more than a simple amendment of place promotional mechanisms and image building methods in order to suit the needs of places (Kavaratzis, 2010).

The intentions for branding Portugal and the northern region have been mostly focused on the communication of logos, slogans and place advertising campaigns, which have been proved in extensive place branding literature to be ineffective in fostering economic restructuring, social inclusion and cohesion, political engagement and participation, place identification, and the general well-being of citizens. In addition, there is an excessive reliance on the objectives of inward investment and visitor attraction to boost the economy and make it more competitive, despite the nature of these branding attempts being doubted repeatedly in the place branding literature.

It seems that policy-makers in Portugal have been adopting a communication promotion based approach to place branding with an emphasis on visual strategies and have done so because they have found themselves needing to rapidly and effectively implement tools for showcasing the country in one "single step". This approach towards place branding has been highly criticised (Kavaratzis, 2012). Taking the same approach, Kavaratzis and Hatch (2013) argue that the process of branding places refers to a set of steps that need to be taken one after the other in order to reach the desired brand. In addition, place branding strategies are likely to be more effective if they engage with stakeholders (Kavaratzis, 2012) and with citizens (Eshuis *et al.*, 2014). Whether this has taken place in the Portuguese case is unclear, mainly because has never been researched. Furthermore, the period 2014 to 2020 lacks strategic ambition and will eventually limit envisioning futures for the country and its regions beyond 2020, thereby breaking ties with the EU framework. However, I acknowledge that scarce financial resources from the national budget, renders the EU a unique source for funding projects in order to support socio-spatial and spatial-economic transformation in Portugal and its regions.

Despite the fact that some documents identify brands and propose place promotion initiatives, there is no coordination with other spatial planning or strategic spatial planning programmes. Two illustrative examples are useful here and can serve to provide a benchmark for the Portuguese case. The Italian region of Tuscany has integrated place branding and spatial planning and can be regarded as a major success of place branding (Van Assche and Lo, 2011). Despite its strength, the Tuscany brand hardly represents those regional areas of which the "otherness" has been analysed (Bellini, Loffredo and Pasquinelli, 2010). Tuscany brand favoured some aspects of the region but ignored many others. "Experience Masterplanning", developed in 2011 by the *East Renfrewshire Council*, a district unitary authority southwest of the city of Glasgow in the west of Scotland (see Allan, 2012), aligned spatial positioning aims with wider spatial planning intervention at the council level. Bringing a spatial dimension to the idea of branding places and its alignment in strategic spatial planning is further discussed below.

3.7. Conclusions

There are three key concluding remarks worth mentioned regarding the branding attempts in Portugal and its northern region and as the result of the content analysis of the 20 spatial plans, strategic initiatives and policy documents analysed:

(1) place branding as a term is absent;

(2) there is a predominance of tourism-oriented promotion initiatives and investment oriented marketing campaigns which are lacking vertically and horizontally institutional articulation, that is the institutional incapacity of exploring synergies or construct shared visions towards the future (envisioning);

(3) inconsistent communication strategies exist, which are each supported by unique visual elements and aesthetic values;

(4) only the documents produced at a cross-border level (Galicia-northern Portugal) seem to better articulate marketing initiatives with more strategic spatial interventions and a vision for the Euroregion in the 2020 horizon (the 2020 horizon follows in line with the EU Strategy 2020 and the Partnership Agreement EU-Portugal for the period 2014-2020).

Despite the fact that Portugal has been promoting its national and local assets since 1906 and one would expect more evolution towards place branding at the national, region and city levels. However, what we see is a cacophony of taglines (sometimes mutually exclusive) and place promotion approaches without coherent integration and alignment between the different tiers of government. I convincingly state that place branding in strategic spatial planning and spatial policy-making is clearly neglected in Portugal, as in many other countries. However, further research is needed to establish how place branding can be integrated into spatial planning.

I argue, that it is necessary to emphasise that the role of place branding in strategic spatial planning in a way that goes far beyond advertising campaigns, place promotion or communication strategies. This linkage would bring spatial consciousness to the branding process of places, and a focus on entrenched day-to-day social and economic issues. These cannot and should not be ignored, if place branding is going to bring about real improvements to a place and its citizens. Furthermore, more integration could also support a correct and efficient use of land and resources (for example current versus future use of industrial and tourism sites), and support more physical planning interventions, the ability to think strategically and envision better futures as well as bridge the gap between place identity and place images. In addition, place branding as an aspect of place marketing that stresses communication between governments and citizens, may be used in support of the visionary realignments often identified in strategic spatial planning initiatives (that is, shape and frame what a place is and what it aims to become). Moreover, place branding integrated with strategic spatial planning would foster economic restructuring, social inclusion and cohesion, political engagement and participation, the reinforcement of place identification and the general long-term well-being of citizens.

Aligning place-branding goals with wider spatial strategies will contribute to bridging the intellectual gap within the branding debate via a nuanced strategic spatial planning approach. Place branding is needed to infuse strategic spatial planning with creativity and dynamism, and can locate the stories of communities and the hopes of place-actors at the heart of the process. Replacing, thus, the stagnation and rigidity of the traditional approach to spatial planning and spatial plan-making. However, I acknowledge that spatial planners are less prepared to deal with market conditions and marketers with socio-spatial and spatial-economic conditions. In addition, the differences in ideology and philosophy between spatial planners and place marketers may be hard to overcome; spatial planners may see more marketing interventions as merely commodifying places – if they are unaware of the critical discussion and development of place branding within the place management literature. However, this chapter argues place branding, in strategic spatial planning, can foster more participation, as it engages people with a place. This does not mean that place branding should be imposed or embedded by force in strategic spatial planning or in spatial plan-making, but could, instead, be the result of coordinated efforts between all place actors and communities. This alignment can evolve place branding theory towards a more strategic spatially-oriented approach.

This chapter had certain limitations. The content analysis was built on documents produced by different authorities that adopted different planning discourses and followed dissimilar spatial development doctrines. In addition, the documents were different in terms of their aims, some being more spatial-oriented, while others embraced economic growth as the core of their objectives. Other documents are available that are also worth analysing (chapter 4 responds to this limitation by employing a content analysis on tourism-oriented online publications in which the tourism potential of Portugal has been discussed). Moreover, I acknowledge the need to extend this study by employing mixed methods (qualitative and quantitate). In addition, there is a need to undertake primary research such as in-depth interviews with national and regional actors to gain a better understanding of their visions regarding a strategic spatial planning approach to place branding and their opinion on a regional branding strategy for northern Portugal (chapter 5 aims to respond to this limitation).

Chapter 4: Content, context and co-creation: a content analysis of tourism-oriented online publications in which the tourism potential of Portugal and its northern region (NUTS II) has been discussed

Chapter overview

Content generated by tourists, travellers, professional travel bloggers and travel journalists who post, comment and share information on social media channels is arguably the greatest digital challenge of destination branding today. The tourist-/traveller-generated content is likely to generate brand value if integrated into the destination branding strategy. There is, however, a lack of theoretical awareness and empirical research into the role of social media content in shaping destination brands in particular and place brands in general. By taking Portugal and its northern region as a case study, this exploratory research is aimed to show how content analysis can be used to identify and understand the way tourists and travellers perceive the country and the region as a tourist destination. The application of this methodology on online material could contribute to a refined destination branding initiative at the national and regional levels by integrating user-generated and travel experts content into the place branding strategy. This chapter follows the methodology of this thesis, and applies textual content analysis by using qualitative data analysis software (that is, ATLAS.ti 7.0), within an interpretative paradigm, on tourism-oriented online publications in which the tourism potential of Portugal and the northern region has been discussed. The findings highlight the tourist/traveller as an opinion maker with access to a plethora of information communication technologies to act as co-creators of place brands. Therefore, it is wise to engage them and strategically integrate the content they generate into the whole place (national/regional) branding effort.

4.1. Introduction

Technological advances and the rise of the empowered tourist/traveller suggest that in the future the most successful destinations will be those that abandon the traditional top-down approach in favour of bottom-up and co-created branding strategies. Therefore, a simple tourist or traveller is an active creator of the destination brand. Developments on the Internet and social media have allowed the acquisition of immeasurable amounts of information, from landscape descriptions to pricing, accommodation rating and also scandals with influence on the image of destinations (Moutinho *et al.*, 2013). It is widely accepted that digital destination branding has become more complex and challenging (Munro and Richards, 2011).

Travellers and tourists, of all ages, increasingly use digital technologies to research, explore, interact, plan, book and ultimately share their travel experiences. There is an extensive array of online channels available to use for this purpose (for example blogs, weblogs, virtual communities and social networking sites). These channels, together with the shift towards traveller empowerment, are demanding new strategies in destination branding initiatives. According to Pan, MacLaurin and Crott (2007), the impact of word of mouth on tourists'/travellers' decision-making process is uncertain and needs to be investigated through new methods. In addition, digital communities and the

traveller-generated contents are creating great opportunities to unobtrusively obtain data to investigate the realm of tourists'/travellers' experiences and sentiments (Volo, 2010).

Travellers, tourists and visitors have the possibility to quickly generate content regarding their travel and vacation experiences and spread it in the blink of an eye. A destination brand conveyed by a destination marketing organization (DMO) is likely to engage in a two-way conversation. Likewise, networked platforms have changed the interface between destinations, their brands and visitors. In fact, it is no longer the traditional vacation marketing mix that dictates the promotion rules; it is now the tourist consumer and the traveller who control the content, influence the context and determine what is communicated about a particular destination (Yeoman and McMahon-Beatie, 2011). The traveller has taken the driving seat in brand identity (Green, 2007). Given these facts, DMOs, such as Visit Portugal and Regional Entity of Tourism of Porto and Northern Portugal, would achieve better results (for example increase the number of visitors and tourist revenues) by using coherent strategies to engage with (potential) visitors through the multiple online channels available. In addition, the Internet and social media platforms are the optimal platforms to spread a narrative, a story and a message. The common citizen that becomes tourist/traveller for a period of time and then becomes non-professional/professional travel bloggers and travel journalists who are no longer mere information seekers but co-creators of information, generating opportunities for them to conveniently share content despite being separated by sociocultural differences and geographical distances (Volo, 2010). Among a range of social media platforms, travel blogs are becoming a more important mechanism for exchanging information among tourists and for destinations and businesses to learn about the attitudes of their markets (Wenger, 2007). Accessing these freely written libraries of content, therefore, represents an occasion for strategic tourism planners to look at the tourist/traveller in his/her natural mental environment and to explore their experiences.

In today's competitive environment, in which visitors can only be attracted by unique attractions (Eriksson, 2013), it is a challenge to improve destination's features, attributes and unique elements to become attractive places to visit (Alvarez, 2012). Innovation, decentralization, engagement, involvement and having a unique voice are the keywords for successful destination branding. In addition, destination brands to survive in a savvy environment, where tourists/travellers are literate individuals, branding strategies should fit their desires (Moutinho *et al.*, 2013). However, it is not an easy task to assert strategies with divergent narratives produced on the same destination. Thus, a challenge remains – how should destinations respond to it? This subject has been covered at length by Destination Marketing Association International and others, but the academic literature remains unclear. According to Reilly (1990), the focus of tourism-image research has been understandably pragmatic and marketing based and requests new thinking in tourism planning and destination management.

Tourism planners, destination managers as well as strategic spatial planners now have the opportunity to connect with customers at many more communications and experience touch points than ever before to influence visitor satisfaction, loyalty and word of mouth (for example by social media). The digital world is truly interconnected, interlocked and interpersonal. It allows disparate items – ads, articles and social experiments – to converge on one page as if they were magic. A destination brand can be defined as the sum of all narratives and experiences. But who defines them?

Are there any inequalities in sharing content (for example by gender)? To what extent gender influences the design of destination branding strategies for example? There are power relations that should be carefully analysed. Destinations are socially constructed and the content produced by travellers is only a part of that process. The better response is to use real-life stories and engage with the content by identifying and interpreting patterns across the narratives in order to achieve consistency in brand positioning.

According to Young (1999), tourist destinations are socially constructed and a negotiated phenomenon. However, the question of how places are socially produced and consumed lies at the core of the geography of tourism (Young, 1999). The social construction of tourist destinations consists of two general subsystems. The first is place production by the tourist industry. In this context, place producers communicate place meanings through promotional, interpretative and market research strategies. The second subsystem is place consumption, which refers to the tourists' own construction of place. Tourists create place meanings using their actual knowledge, travel history, motivations and preferences. Where the constructions overlap, there exists the negotiated reality of the consensus zone. Which places are selected to be branded for tourism purposes, how and why they are given particular meanings and how these meanings are communicated to create convergence between these two perspectives of place are key aspects of the spatial dimension of social construction (Young, 1999).

The notion of perceived authenticity is also of particular interest because constructivists, tourists and travellers are indeed in search of authenticity (Wang, 1999). However, what they quest for is not objective authenticity (that is, authenticity as originals) but a perceived authenticity which is the result of social construction. Destinations and the 'tourist attractions' are experienced as authentic not because they are originals or reality, but because they are perceived as the signs or symbols of authenticity (Culler, 1981) nowadays influenced by digital platforms. Perceived authenticity is more often than not a projection of certain stereotyped images held and circulated within tourist promotion platforms, particularly within the mass media and destination marketing campaigns (Wang, 1999). Understanding exactly how individuals perceive and use the information spread by both online and traditional promotion channels when planning their trips is a challenge that requires suitable strategies (Alvarez and Asugman, 2006). By not understanding it, there is the risk of damaging the perceived integrity and transparency of the destination's brand and reputation (Munro and Richards, 2011).

The accelerating and synergistic interaction between information communication technologies (ICTs) and tourism destinations has transformed the nature of tourism products, processes, business and the competitive environment around them. Among the range of ICTs, the Internet is the number one source of information for travel and tourism (Munro and Richards, 2011). Websites are incredibly important for the business of destinations (Buhalis *et al.*, 2011). Factors including a fresh wave of web-based communities, known as web 2.0 and social media (for example Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, You-Tube and TripAdvisor), have changed market conditions for DMOs (Buhalis *et al.*, 2011; Page, 2009). Furthermore, social media has become a highly effective way to reach out and engage with the masses. In particular, social media allows a DMO to develop an online voice, which should be consistent with its destination brand (North, 2013a). Therefore, a resilient

and strategic approach to digital channels should be a corner stone of a strong destination branding strategy. Recent literature on tourism planning as Moutinho *et al.* (2013) and on place branding as Pareja-Eastway *et al.* (2013) suggest that organizations in charge of designing branding strategies shall concentrate their effort on:

- **Content**: focusing on the interaction between traveller/tourist and destination; engaging traveller/tourist with the destination branding process;
- **Context**: tailor-made approaches and context-sensitive strategies; integrate traveller-generated content;
- **Co-creation**: co-creating value through traveller/tourist and the destination; destination branding through co-creation (that is, traveller as active participant in the branding process).

Some studies reflect upon tourism communities (Wang *et al.*, 2002), users' reviews and recommendations (Yoo and Gretzel, 2008), electronic tourism (Buhalis *et al.*, 2011), perceived authenticity (Wang, 1999), and others on social media strategies for tourism destinations (Munar *et al.*, 2013) and ICTs in tourism destination management (Buhalis and Matloka, 2013; Leung *et al.*, 2013). However, there remains a gap in knowledge which investigates the relevance of tourist/traveller-generated content on the destination branding process.

By taking Portugal and its northern region as a case study, this exploratory research is aimed to show how content analysis can be used to identify and understand the way tourists'/travellers' perceive Portugal as a tourist destination. The application of this methodology on online material could better support a destination branding initiative for Portugal by integrating tourist-/traveller generated content (that is, narrative, stories and vacation experiences) and travel experts content into the strategy, thus, co-creating tourist destination branding strategies.

To this end, a qualitative methodology has been applied. The implication of qualitative methods emerged from the principal approach of this research to obtain in-depth understanding of how travellers perceive, interpret and communicate the social reality of the destination visited. An inductive approach was adopted to address the research aims that are subjective in nature and within an interpretative paradigm. According to Decrop (1999), interpretivism in tourism related studies is better approached by qualitative methods. The qualitative approach used in this exploratory research is in line with the methodology of various studies that focus on the meaning and understanding of destination image (Echtner and Ritchie, 2003; Govers *et al.*, 2007; Pike, 2002 and Tasci and Kozak, 2006). In addition, embracing previous studies on virtual destination image (Govers *et al.*, 2007), e-tourism (Buhalis *et al.*, 2011), communication strategies and city marketing (Díaz-Luque, 2009; Munuiz-Martínez and Cervantes-Blanco, 2009), which mostly use qualitative techniques, are fundamental to enhancing arguments and justifying the present research methodology. Specifically, a textual content analysis was conducted on 20 international tourism-oriented online publications from distinct, distinctive and neutral sources, all referring to Portugal (as a whole or specific cities or regions of the country).

The articles/texts were examined and findings presented, aiming to capture holistic components of Portugal as a tourist destination. As the objective is to interpret the content of publications where Portugal and its northern region are reference, a content analysis will be a more valuable tool. Similar studies on destination image apply the same methodology (Volo, 2010; Wenger, 2007). The content analysis approach is a form of scientific inquiry that has commonly been regarded as a useful method for social science studies, especially in consumer research (Kassarjian, 1977). In addition, content analysis has been used in several studies to analyse research articles in hospitality and tourism management (see, for example, Singh *et al.*, 2007).

The results from the content analysis of both the computer-aided and human judgmental methods were then integrated and conceptually graphed to map meaningful findings that were logically precise, humanly readable and computationally tractable (for example ATLAS.ti 7.0). The reason for using this software is twofold. One, because with today's computerized neural network content analysis software such as CATPAC, NVivo 2.0 or ATLAS.ti, the reliability of the results is more guaranteed (see, for example, Govers *et al.*, 2007). Second, according to Lewis (1998), ATLAS.ti emerged as the clear winner in the overall product comparison with other qualitative software such as NVivo 2.0.

ATLAS.ti is a self-organizing artificial neural network software package used for content analysis of text. The software is able to identify the most important words in a text and determine the patterns of similarity based on the way they are used in the text (Govers *et al.*, 2007). In simple terms, this software produces a frequency table and proximity matrix for the most often used words in the text, based on their co-occurrences in one unit of analysis (Zull and Landmann, 2004). Even though it requires the researcher to use human judgment in making decisions about the data, the decisions must be guided by an explicit set of rules. The findings must have theoretical relevance and be generalized (Kolbe and Burnett, 1991).

The application of this methodology on online material could better support a destination branding strategy for Portugal by integrating tourist-/traveller-generated content and travel experts content into the strategy, as a back office task. In particular, it helps academics and practitioners to better understand a new, emerging phenomenon - the co-creation of place branding strategies. As such, the chapter will contribute to the interplay between theoretical awareness and methodological sophistication in the integration of digital channels, including traveller-generated content platforms. Bearing in mind the best practices in dealing with the changing digital landscape (for example Tourism Australia, Visit Sweden and Penang State Tourism in Malaysia), this study reflects on digital strategies to respond to the digital opportunities and threats in destination branding.

In the context of futuristic thinking in destination branding and future casting mega trends in tourism, it has been argued that the ever evolving channels of social media and the consumer shift represented by the new e-generation are now inevitable factors in destination planning (Moutinho *et al.*, 2013). By 2013, social media engagement has become the top Internet activity, a higher time spend than any other major Internet activity (GWI - Global Web Index, 2014). Within this context, the main contribution of this chapter arises from the integration of social content analysis into destination branding strategy. The findings add to destination branding practice and advocate that DMOs, governmental agencies, regional entities, such as TPNP, or tourism agencies are requested to

co-create effective destination branding strategies to deal with the growing number of digital platforms, tools and devices and satisfy tourists'/travellers' expectations.

4.2. Tourism and place branding for tourism purposes

Tourism has often been seen as a key element in the development of places, which are adopting branding strategies – meant to gain a competitive position and assert their identity – in their communication with potential tourists (Morgan *et al.*, 2011). Branding is considered a powerful tool to develop places (Morgan *et al.*, 2003). Cities such as Amsterdam (Kavaratzis and Ashworth, 2006), Manchester (Ward, 2000) and Bradford (Trueman *et al.*, 2004) have already reinforced their image among visitors, investors, entrepreneurs, researchers and, desirably, among residents. Countries such as Thailand (Nuttavuthisit, 2007), Costa Rica, Moldova (Florek and Conejo, 2007), Ireland (O'Leary and Deegan, 2003) and Turkey (Kemming and Sandikci, 2007) have undergone the processes of destination branding and promoting a positive tourist-oriented image.

According to Buhalis (2000), a tourist destination is a "geographical region which is understood by its visitors as a unique entity, with political and legislative framework for tourism marketing and planning" (p. 98). Saarinen (2004) cited in Morgan *et al.* (2011, p. 4) interprets a tourism destination as "socioculturally produced space in a constantly evolving discursive practice". Tourism images reflect people's geographical imagination and contribute to the making of imaginative geographies, which refer to generally held ideas about particular places and regions. This representation of tourism destination is a fundamental part to define what a destination is. Narratives, discourse, tourist/traveller opinions changes through time, context, gender and cultural background. In order to be successfully promoted in the targeted markets, a destination must be favourably differentiated from its competitors, or positively positioned, in the minds of the consumers and potential visitors. A key component of this positioning process is the creation, management and communication of a distinctive and appealing image (Echtner and Ritchie, 2003). In addition, tourism destinations are inherently complex. A range of social, economic, legal and technological policies affect their appeal, attractiveness, competitiveness and sustainability (Brent-Ritchie and Crouch, 2011).

Destination branding is focused in lowering costs, changing the type of visitors and changing the nature or behaviour of visitors. Destination branding also plays a core role in changing tourism products, integrating place actors and communities, avoiding irritations and responding to issues posed to places. For instance, those issues are created by the present economic crisis or the fluctuating process of exploring, researching, confirming and sharing travel experiences. However, branding places is not a magical solution. Given the complex nature of destinations, it is rather difficult and time consuming to persuade visitors to change their perceptions about a destination. An extensive network that brings visitors and destinations closer to each other composes the technological environment. Ultimately, the goal is to engage visitors with destinations. It is also to create strategies for communicating assertively about the kinds of experiences potential visitors may expect. Setting out a destination branding strategy and integrating it with ICTs emerges with the need for coordination of frontend and back office applications (Muñiz-Martínez and Cervantes-Blanco, 2009). Place marketers, strategic spatial planners, tourism planners and DMOs play a major role in turning communities and cultures into tourism destinations.

There is also a case in which tourism destinations flourish without cultures, communities or identities (for example Las Vegas). The branding process of a destination requires a strong vision, focus and commitment of time. In addition, it also requires qualified human resources, engagement with stakeholders, financial resources and changes in decision-making, culture and mindset (Balakrishnan, 2009). The Internet and the social media channels have generated numerous online user (traveller/tourist) reviews. According to Ye *et al.* (2011), previous studies have revealed the influence of user-generated content on the sales of products. However, the influence of online user generated reviews in the tourism industry is still largely unknown to both tourism researchers and practitioners (Sigala, 2011; Ye *et al.*, 2011). Therefore, there is a need for theoretical awareness and empirical research with regard to the role of the web 2.0, the empowerment of the traveller/tourist and the content they generate in shaping destination brands (Buhalis *et al.*, 2011; Munar, 2011).

Besides the acknowledged value of the user-generated content in branding tourist destinations (Munar, 2011), the literature (Pareja-Eastway *et al.*, 2013) suggests tailored branding strategies, which focus on local realities, assets, tangible and intangible elements. Context sensitive approaches, as opposite to one strategy fits all, are required to achieve effective, sustainable and long-term success in particular in times in which the digital realm is contributing to a borderless world.

4.3. Digital evolutions and place branding

With the growing importance of the Internet for travel planning, understanding the online domain of tourism is vital in order to identify the challenges and potential solutions for effectively branding travel destinations. Travellers seek inspiration online, anticipate more trips or holidays and want to stay connected while travelling. The Internet is now as essential for inspiring new travel as it is for planning them (Google Think, 2013). Moreover, the Internet has revolutionized the travel planning process. According to the Digital Portal of the European Travel Commission, nearly 183 million European Internet users visited travel websites in March 2013 (Travel Daily News, 2013) (Table 4.1.).

Table 4.1. The methods used for booking by European travellers in 2013 compared with 2003.

Methods	2003	2013
Internet	13%	**76%**
Travel agent	65%	18%
Telephone	22%	5%

Source: own elaboration based on European Commission (2013).

According to the survey Attitudes of Europeans Towards Tourism (European Commission, 2013), the most frequently used sources of information for trip planning are:

(1) recommendations from friends, colleagues or relatives: 56 per cent;
(2) internet websites: 46 per cent;
(3) personal experience about a destination: 34 per cent;
(4) travel agencies and tourism offices: 21 per cent;
(5) tourism brochures and catalogues: 11 per cent.

The lower values of the more traditional mechanisms to plan holidays, such as travel agencies and tourism offices (21 per cent) and catalogues (11 per cent), clearly highlight the increasing digital challenges in destination branding. Digital revolutions are demanding conceptual, methodological and strategic evolutions on destination branding (Morgan *et al.*, 2011). According to Balakrishnan (2009), managing a destination's international image and reputation requires strategies capable of leaving a clear and unique image in the minds of tourists. The messages should be consistent across all digital media channels.

Moreover, travellers are now socially connected during the entire travelling spectrum. Moutinho *et al.* (2013, p. 317) refer to it as "New Socio quake". In response, Javier González-Soria has underlined that the tourism industry should use social media much more intensively (see ITB World Travel Trends Report, 2013). In addition, the travel industry has to respond honestly and transparently to problems or criticism regarding their assets, values and tourism potential – where tourists should be active participants, not passive audience (Moutinho *et al.*, 2013). Integrating the content they generate into the process is actively engaging them with the branding process of a destination (for example city, region and country).

Tailor-made and context-sensitive approaches to place branding, for instance for tourist destinations (Moutinho *et al.*, 2013; Pareja-Eastway *et al.*, 2013), integration between online tourist-/traveller-generated content and branding strategies, the core points of this chapter, bring novelty to the literature on place branding by exploring co-creation of place brands. Furthermore, virtual communities, blogs, social networking sites and tourism review pages give a platform for online opinion leaders from anywhere across the globe express their opinions. As a consequence, they influence the public realm and co-create destination brands (Moutinho *et al.*, 2013). The traveller is now empowered to create and tailor the brand themselves; it is the traveller who now won the brand (Moutinho *et al.*, 2013).

4.4. Digital trends, technologies and best practices in place branding for tourism purposes

DMOs and governmental entities, such as Visit Portugal or TPNP, encounter tough international competition and so the adoption of information communication technologies in branding processes has become a strategic imperative.

Every country, city and region offers a certain package of tourism products, some integrated into a destination brand, others only communicated through promotional material. Because of this, the tourism activity has become saturated with choice. Given these facts, there is pressure for destination branding to focus on applying the right set of digital tools rather than the technicalities of the tools themselves.

Internet, websites and social media have now become main stream in the tourism industry (Digital Tourism Think Tank, 2013). Furthermore, the ITB World Travel Trends Report (2013) states that social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and YouTube, in recent years, are increasingly being used for travel and tourism purposes. Travellers are using ICTs to exchange pictures and videos from past vacation experiences; to share ideas about possible holiday trips and to seek opinions and reviews of destinations, hotels, attractions and countless other travel-related activities (Buhalis and Matloka, 2013). The ITB World Travel Trends (2013) reports that:

- 40 per cent of travellers said social network comments influenced their travel planning;
- 50 per cent actually based their travel plans on other people's reviews and experiences. The European Digital Landscape (2014) reports that:
    - The average European social media penetration is 40 per cent (considerably higher than the world average);
    - Portugal, with 48 per cent is one those 21 European countries with a higher than average social media penetration rate.

A considerable number of DMOs consider social media either as the key ingredient to their destination strategy or at least as one of their main digital tools. In reality, if the tourism website of a destination does not display the territory or destination brand, but instead uses the brand of the promotional agency or DMO, it may reflect the fact that the destination brand needs further development (Roig *et al.*, 2010). Among the tools to measure the performance of country brands, the Bloom Consulting Country Brand Ranking (Bloom Consulting, 2013) provides insights into how countries use social media to interact with the public. However, DMOs are aware of the values and advantages of using social media (together with websites and weblogs) to promote their assets, distinctive competency and address challenges that result in achieving strategic performance objectives. One of the best examples in the world that harnessed the power of Facebook and Instagram to engage with a global audience is Tourism Australia (North, 2013a).

Tourism Australia has one of the most popular destination pages in the world (O'Neill, 2013). Their Facebook page has approximately 7 million "likes" (information updated on 22 October 2015, see https://www.facebook.com/SeeAustralia). The use of social media by Tourism Australia DMO strengthens Australia's nation brand and promotes the country as a tourism destination. Portugal could learn from the Tourism Australia digital dynamic in giving visibility to their tourism potential, in particular the way it engages with the traveller.

Visit Sweden conducted another concrete case of how a DMO can successfully handle digital challenges in destination branding. Visit Sweden started a frenetic and innovative campaign on Twitter – I'Sweden (followed by approximately 87,000 users; information updated on 22 October 2015, see https://twitter.com/sweden). The aim of the campaign was to present Sweden to the world as well as strengthening the nation's brand and hopefully, as increasing tourism revenues (North, 2013b). Visit Sweden handled its national Twitter account by selecting a different Swede every week to curate the Twitter feed by tweeting their thoughts to the world. The Curators of

Sweden campaign sought to prove this and reinforce it by being ultra-progressive on Twitter (North, 2013b). Portugal could also learn from these two examples, taken as best practices in integrating user-generated content and dealing with digital challenges in the branding process. The way both breakthrough digital channels could inspire Visit Portugal to craft a destination branding strategy to put together the voices of visitors, the content generated by travel bloggers, normal tourist/travellers, shared through social media (for example https://www.facebook.com/Visitportugal, https://twitter.com/PortoeNortePT and https://www.facebook.com/InsidePortugalTravel), the objectives of tourism actors and the goals of the organization (Oliveira, 2013a; 2013b; 2013c).

4.5. Using hashtags in place branding

Nowadays, there is a kaleidoscope of mobile applications and start-ups, which are making waves in the travel industry and developing a smarter way of travelling (Way and Scoble, 2013). Many major DMOs now have Twitter accounts to communicate and promote their destination. Some of them create hashtags to promote specific events, campaigns or the destination brand itself (Oliveira, 2013c). The use of hashtags on social media channels often increases the influence of content (making it public). Hashtags are those short links preceded by the sign - #. They are used to mark keywords or topics (for example #visitportugal #visitnorthernportugal and #heritage). A destination should create their one set of hashtags (Hiscott, 2013).

The hashtag was created organically by Twitter users as a way to categorize messages. Now it is also linked to content on Facebook, Google+ and Tumblr and is an extremely powerful tool on Instagram and Pinterest (photo-sharing tools). Hashtags are integral to the way we communicate online, and it is important to know how to use them (Hiscott, 2013). Clicking on a hashtagged word in any tweet, message, photo or post shows all other tweets, messages, photos or posts marked with that keyword from all around the world. In seconds, they become a piece of knowledge on the global sphere. The Malaysian Penang State Tourism - Twitter account (followed by approximately 12,000 users; information updated on 22 October 2015, see https://twitter.com/VisitPenang) and Visit Penang Instagram feed (followed by approximately 7000 users; information updated on 22 October 2015, see https://instagram.com/visitpenang/). In both accounts, it is possible to follow similar content by clicking on the hashtagged word (for example #georgetown and #penang). This action will open another page with all the pictures and tweets marked as #penang. Penang State Tourism is the tourism organization of the Malaysian island state with the same name. The authors use Penang State Tourism as an example, because recent research demonstrates that Penang Tourism DMO is more active among the DMOs using Instagram connected to Twitter and it allows interaction with the traveller. In addition, Malaysia ranks among the top 10 world tourist destinations in terms of international tourist arrivals (United Nations World Tourism Organisation, 2013).

DMOs already acknowledge that social media tools are no longer in their embryonic stages and therefore (potential) visitors need to be supplied coherently with relevant material on these channels. This in turn requires digital strategies. The way Penang State Tourism uses hashtagged words, to communicate content, works as a best practice for the Portuguese branding process and destination branding. A hashtag used successfully across channels is a marketer's and tourism planner's dream. If used well, an offline campaign can be tracked using the online platforms that make digital branding

strategies so compelling. Hashtags increase the relevance of electronic word of mouth and are a valuable tool to share tastes (for example #delicious #portuguesecuisine), attitudes (that is, #inlove with #sunnyportugal) and experiences (that is, had great #holidays in #southportugal). Moutinho *et al.* (2013) argue that those persons, who share tastes and attitudes, are the only trustworthy source of information in the "new e-generation" of the tourism sector (2013, p. 318).

4.6. The need for a digital strategy in place branding

The growing competition in the global marketplace puts, on one hand, intense pressure on tourism destinations to guarantee long-term economic success as well as sustainability (Kastenholz *et al.,* 2013). On the other hand, the complexity of the destination branding exercise requires digital strategies to face the advancement of digital and online technologies. The digital atmosphere provides extraordinary levels of direct engagement of travellers with one another (Kavaratzis, 2012). Travellers can now create content that can influence future visits to a destination. Taking an Instagram picture of one destination asset (for example Cais da Ribeira, in Porto, northern Portugal, by focusing on the case of this study or the Petronas Towers in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia) and sharing it via social media has changed the way the world accesses destination information.

Traveller-generated content affects the way a destination is communicated to the outside and inside territory alike. According to Florek (2011, p. 83), "web 2.0 provides services that invite users to engage in direct and strong participation" and "with the advent of user-generated content, every individual might potentially influence the way in which [a territory] is perceived and evaluated". Therefore, implementing digital strategic thinking in destination branding is paramount. Digital channels provide forums for travellers to discuss the places they have visited, write about travel experiences and upload photos and videos. The travel experience starts with a dream. Potential visitors will use the Internet to plan and book their vacation. Afterwards, they will share their thoughts and feelings by using online means. The new luxury in tourism is not related to wealth but the use of time, simplicity and richness of experience that create long lasting memories (Moutinho *et al.*, 2013).

In practice, a digital strategy should integrate traveller-generated content into the destination branding process and thinking in advance the right tools to engage with it (that is, digital branding strategic thinking). Destination branding experts could work in an integrative way with social media and electronic tourism experts in a coherent way, maintaining communities of interest, collecting content, displaying photos and videos, emphasizing local events, and encouraging electronic word of mouth (eWOM) recommendations. Understanding that content, qualitative and diverse information are the key to successful destination brand should be a key part of any destination branding strategy.

A destination brand is likely to be more effective if it is part of the destination's overall branding effort and that is much more than creating a logo, a tag line or opening a social media page (Díaz-Luque, 2009). The process should consider the community's needs, staying clearly focused on community objectives. In addition, engaging with place actors and building the destination brand with them in an active and participatory way will positively benefit the process. Communication of the brand image consistently and coherently with the strategy is fundamental to maintain and/or improve the brand reputation and give visibility to the place/destination (Munro and Richards,

2011). The place/destination brand reputation should be moulded by dialogue and branding strategies crafted (see Mintzberg, 1987) to the social and spatial context. If the DMO involves the visitors, they will be more likely to keep the message in mind, talk about with their friends and relatives and spread it around the world using online channels. Travellers become co-creators of the brand (Moutinho *et al.*, 2013). However, the authors acknowledge the difficulties of managing collective online opinion and discourse (that is, generated content) and how to engage across the variety of channels in an integrated way (that is, tools in strategy). Organizations in charge of a destination brand are recommended to eavesdrop on all the information/content created/generated by tourists/travellers. Researching with effective methodology and understanding how the destination is perceived and communicated will provide compelling, timely and relevant paths to a successful destination branding strategy.

4.7. Research methodology
4.7.1. Justifying the qualitative approach employed
Tourist destinations are not ontologically pre given but, instead, socially constructed (Saarinen, 2004 cited in Morgan *et al.*, 2011). Therefore, one could argue on the relevance of using qualitative methods to understand how destinations are socially constructed as well as the relevance of co-creation in place branding. And yet, the investigation highlights that tourist destinations do not constitute a structure of ontologically pre-arranged places but rather are the outcome of ongoing narratives among tourist/traveller through which content is constantly reproduced and nurtured during the branding process. The epistemological assumptions in these instances determine extreme positions on the issue of whether knowledge/content is something which can be acquired on the one hand or is something which has to be personally experienced on the other. How we come to know tourist destinations? Is it about reading and interpreting content generated by tourists/travellers or by experiencing them? In addition, how to integrate this knowledge into the destination branding strategy? Bearing these ontological and epistemological assumptions, this study employs a qualitative framework within an interpretative paradigm.

Qualitative research has gained acceptance in many fields, such as education, anthropology, and consumer behaviour (Riley and Love, 2000). Qualitative research is often qualified as bricolage or art, in contrast with quantitative research. If one accepts the principle that science is not a question of numbers but of reasoning, a qualitative study can be as sound as a quantitative one in tourism studies (Riley, 1996). However, studies that employ qualitative methods in tourism research and assessing destination image are rare (Govers *et al.*, 2007). Those studies lack a deeper understanding of the holistic nature and subjective perspective of the individual, not the destination's unique image features (Echtner and Ritchie, 2003; Govers *et al.*, 2007).

Being a timely and dynamic issue, the digital challenge in place/destination branding requires pluralistic approaches as liking the two seems fundamental to assert the rapid expansion of online channels dedicated to travel and tourism with the branding process of places. According to McDougall and Fry (1974), the use of unstructured instruments, followed by content analysis and coding, is more appropriate in image research. Further in time, Echtner and Ritchie (2003) suggest a combination of structured and unstructured methodologies to measure destination image through

travellers' narratives. Recently, an increasing number of researchers in tourism studies (see Hannam and Knox, 2005), hospitality (see Singh *et al.*, 2007) and destination image online (see Govers and Go, 2004; Govers *et al.*, 2007; Hsu and Song, 2013) are using specific research methods that are often conveniently grouped together under the term discourse analysis, for instance, text mining and content analysis when faced with qualitative or textual forms of data, such as written documents (for example strategic spatial plans; policy documents as in chapter 3) or visual materials (for example photographs; videos; instagrams) (see, for example, Hannam and Knox, 2005; Singh *et al.*, 2007). Despite that content analysis is not a new technique it stills very useful in the analysis of written documents including online material. The authors have applied this technique to prepare chapters 3, 4, 5 and 6 of this thesis.

Following the application of qualitative methods (see, for example, Tasci and Kozak, 2006) and analysis in tourist destination studies (see, for example, Govers and Go, 2004; Govers *et al.*, 2007) and bearing in mind the complexity of the digital challenge, the novelty of this research lies in the application of content analysis of written signs/text (Dann, 1996) from tourism-oriented online publications. The advantages of applying this methodology, is that by using the right qualitative research software, and coding (for example ATLAS.ti), the process of getting the information is easier, faster and dynamic. Moreover, it allows researchers and tourism organizations/DMOs (data seekers) to keep up to date their studies and reports. Daily, the World Wide Web publishes information relevant to keeping higher levels of dynamism in destination branding exercises (generated content) and also to fit, sharply, the experiences offered with the tourist expectations and needs and get the message across.

4.7.2. Content analysis of tourism-oriented online publications

Content analysis is an empirical technique, which involves the counting, identification of issues and interpretation of the content of a text, which is assumed to be significant (Hannam and Knox, 2005). Content analysis calls for the categorization of the various elements or components to help researchers explain trends (Kassarjian, 1977; Krippendorff, 2003). The argument here is that content analysis is suited to contribute to a better understanding of the paths for effective and reliable branding strategies for Portugal as a tourist destination. Several authors were pioneers in the research topic of travel blogs and other free tourism-oriented online publications. Moreover, they have published research that actually analysed content written by traveller bloggers (Pan *et al.*, 2007; Pudliner, 2007; Tussyadiah and Fesenmaier, 2008; Volo, 2009; Wenger, 2007; Woodside *et al.*, 2007).

The research of the abovementioned authos is very valuable in insights about traveller-generated content and shows potential power in the co-creation of brands (Volo, 2010). For instance, Pan *et al.* (2007) analyse 40 travel blogs on South Carolina, USA, using a combination of semantic network analysis and content analysis. Recent studies that intended to investigate online channels' usage and social media involvement to promote Portugal as a tourism destination, content analysis has been applied on online newspaper (Oliveira, 2013a, 2013b). The present chapter explains further the application of this methodology in travel blogs and travel review pages with references to Portugal as tourist destination

4.7.3. Content analysis with references to Portugal and northern Portugal as tourist destination

By taking Portugal and its regions, in particular northern Portugal region, as a case study, this exploratory research applies a textual content analysis on 20 tourism-oriented online publications in which Portugal (and Portuguese territories) has/have been referenced.

The selection followed the author's own decision, after careful analysis of the links shared on the official Facebook page of the Portuguese National Tourist Office in New York, USA – Inside Portugal Travel (https://www.facebook.com/InsidePortugalTravel) with support from Visit Portugal. The content analysis was conducted on 20 relevant articles published between 1 September 2013, and 20 February 2014, in specific websites (Table 4.2.). Out of 20, 14 texts constitute the sample that has been analysed within and interpretative stance.

The text of the 20 publications was content analysed and research findings are presented (Table 4.3.). The software ATLAS.ti 7.0 was used. ATLAS.ti is designed to offer qualitative-oriented social researchers support for their activities involving the interpretation of signs (written and visual). One very early and important design decision was to leave creative, intellectual tasks with the human interpreter. The tool WordCruncher was applied to set out the frequency of words (that supports the interpretation of the content, context and co-creation and to identify potential hashtags and suggesting tools; Table 4.3.). Content generated by travel bloggers and tourism reviewers was analysed and potential relevant elements to integrate a destination brand for Portugal identified.

Table 4.2. List of online articles content analysed September 2013 - February 2014.

1) ***Head for the Hills***
   http://monocle.com/magazine/issues/69/head-for-the-hills/ (Dec 13 / Jan 14)*
2) ***The Cool Hunter - Culture and design website***
   http://www.thecoolhunter.net/article/detail/2219/grahams-1890-lodge---douro-portugal (11/11/2013)*
3) ***Personal travel blog - Julie Dawn Fox in Portugal***
   http://juliedawnfox.com/2013/11/21/rock-art-foz-coa/ (21/11/2013)*
4) ***Parents: Let the Azores save your New Year's Eve***
   http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/wonkblog/wp/2013/12/31/parents-let-the-azores-save-your-new-years-eve/ (31/12/2013)*
5) ***10 Delicious Reasons Why You Should Visit Portugal!***
   http://catavino.net/10-delicious-reasons-why-you-should-visit-portugal/ (12/12/2013)*
6) ***Honeymoon Islands - Madeira – Portugal***
   http://www.azores-adventures.com/2013/12/honeymoon-islands-madeira-portugal.html (20/12/2013)*
7) ***Europe's 10 Best Adventure Destinations***

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/minube/europes-10-best-adventure_b_4315349.html (21/11/2013)*

8) *The Ten Most Beautiful Places in Portugal*
http://www.viator.com/Porto-and-Northern-Portugal/d219/top-attractions#feature (December/2013)*

9) *For your consideration...Portugal*
http://www.eturbonews.com/42543/your-considerationportugal (07/02/2014)*

10) *The top European destination for 2014: Porto, northern Portugal*
http://www.themalaymailonline.com/travel/article/the-top-european-destination-for-2014-porto-portugal#sthash.Rsoz5xcH.dpuf (18/02/2014)*

11) *New summer holiday temptations in Portugal, Turkey and Ibiza*
http://metro.co.uk/2014/02/19/new-summer-holiday-temptations-in-portugal-turkey-and-ibiza-4309006/ (19/02/2014)*

12) *Porto Elected "Gastronomy Destination 2013" By The Wine Magazine*
http://greatwinecapitals.com/news/general-news/1556 (03/02/2014)

13) *25 Most Photographed Cities in Europe*
http://www.touropia.com/most-photographed-cities-in-europe/ (02/02/2014)*

14) *Portugal summer holidays guide: 2014*
http://www.telegraph.co.uk/travel/destination/portugal/125200/Portugal-summer-holidays-guide-2014.html (20/02/2014)*

15) *Lisbon, Portugal - Baixa, Heart of the City*
http://www.huffingtonpost.com/illeana-hoffman/lisbon-portugal-baxia-hea_b_4731044.html (06/02/2014)

16) *6 affordable European capitals to conquer*
http://www.bankrate.com/lite/travel/affordable-european-capitals-2.aspx (Jan/2014)

17) *Where to Eat in Lisbon*
http://stylecartel.com/restaurant-hotspots-lisbon-portugal/ (20/01/2014)

18) *Europe's Best Hidden Beaches*
http://www.huffingtonpost.com/jetsettercom/europes-best-hidden-beach_b_4612036.html (16/01/2014)

19) *Rockin' River Art In Portugal*
http://www.globaltravelerusa.com/add-oporto/ (Feb/2014)

20) *Travel tips: La Graciosa, 2014 hotspots and the Cotswolds*
http://www.theguardian.com/travel/2014/jan/19/travel-tips-la-graciosa-canary-island-greece-portugal-cotswolds (19/01/2014)

4.8. Research findings

Table 4.3. summarizes the findings of the textual content analysis. Particular emphasis is given to the tourist-/traveller-generated content (content column). The context refers to the geographical unit referred in the publication and the tourist product emphasized. As underlined in the introductory part and literature review, the content generated by the tourist/traveller could support a design of effective and efficient destination branding strategies (that is, co-creation of the brand) and boost existing tourist products of Portugal. The authors also highlight the words that could be "hashtagged" and communicated via digital channels, such as Twitter, Facebook or other social networking sites and mobile apps, drones and digital kiosk (that is, tools). Subjectivity and personal creativity based on the literature and previous research (see Oliveira, 2013c) supports the hashtag/tools suggestions/recomendations (Table 4.3.).

Table 4.3. Research findings for 14 of the 20 online articles content analysed (grey colour highlitghs the reference to northern Portugal).

N.*	Content**	Context	Co-Creation	Hashtags	Tools
1	Shopping Gastronomy Fashion city	Lisbon Chiado area	Highlight shopping and gastronomy	#shoppinginlisbon #lisbonisfashion #lisbontaste	Twitter Instagram Foursquare
2	Wine tourism Gastronomy Port Wine (Vinho do Porto)	Douro Valley Porto Northern Portugal	Port Wine as product Porto City Breaks Regional touring	#portwine #vinhodoporto #portuguesegastronomy #stylishcity #visitnorthernportugal	Twitter Instagram Wine review blogs
3	UNESCO Rock art World Heritage Site. (-) There isn't a great deal of information in English	Douro and Côa Valleys Porto Foz Côa Northern Portugal	UNESCO World Heritage in Portugal Improve informational material	#ancientinportugal #unescoinportugal #portugueserockart #rockart #worldheritage #culturaltourism #visitnorthernportugal	Twitter Instagram Digital language platforms YouTube (using drones for video-making) Mobile apps with UNESCO heritage in Portugal
4	A string of islands about	Azores (Açores	Targeting American	#azores #newyearsevedestination	Twitter Weblogs in

	1,000 miles west of Portugal.	Island)	travellers Seasonal vacation packs	#visitazores #portugueseislands	USA Invite travel bloggers
5	Portugal as home away from home Ten delicious reasons to take vacations in Portugal	Portugal	Wine Food Gastronomy as product	#portugal #yourhomeaway #foodiedestination	Facebook Wine Magazines Food and Wine websites
6	Igniting the flames of love Madeira - Island of flowers	Portugal Madeira Island Botanic and Orchid Gardens Laurissilva Forest	Romantic destination Madeira Wine UNESCO World Heritage Travel packs Portugal-Madeira-Portugal	#unforgettablesunsents #romantic #romanticmadeira #romantichoneymoon #madeiraportugal #islandflowers #madeirawine	Twitter Facebook Instagram YouTube Weblogs dedicated to honeymoons
7	Madeira, along with the Azores, is one of Portugal's Atlantic Adventure Destinations archipelagoes and as classified as one of the as Europe's Best Adventure Destinations	Madeira Volcanic ridges Stunning trails Arieiro rocky peak	Adventure Destinations Adventure tourism Wine tourism Climbing activities	#madeiraisadventure #climinmadeira #climbing #adventure #traveladventurous	Twitter Facebook YouTube Drones for video-making Mobile apps with trails and where to climb
8	Palaces and cathedrals Golfers or sun-worshippers. Algarve. Beautiful towns and regions it's hard to pick ten most beautiful	Portugal Lisbon Sintra Óbidos Évora Porto Braga Algarve North	Multipack Regional and city touring History, built heritage Nature and River Valleys	#portugal #sun #sunnydestinations #golfinportugal #visitsintra #portugueseislands #visitazores #visitmadeira #portugalisnature	Twitter Instagram Facebook Weblogs open to comments

	places in Portugal	Douro Valley Madeira Azores	Landspace	#bragaaugusta #visitnorthernportugal	
9	If Portugal is on your list of places to visit in the upcoming months. Palace hotel as luxurious and romantic	Bussaco Palace Casa de Sezim Palácio de Seteais Palacio Belmonte Solar Monfalim	Multipack Regional and city touring Romantic destination Romantic tourist packs	#portugal #romanticdestinations #forlovevisitportugal #portugal #palaceparadise	Twitter Instagram Facebook Hotel booking platforms Mobile apps with hotel-palaces
10	The top European destination for 2014: Porto, Portugal Porto city of street festivals, fireworks and barbecued sardines and meats.	Portugal Porto Northern Portugal	Gastronomy Fish experts Sardine Ethnography Folklore Traditions	#porto #besteuropeandestination #portuguesefood #fishisinportugal #fish #visitnorthernportugal	Twitter Instagram Facebook YouTube Foursquare Mobile apps Free download of traditional music Digital kiosk
11	A high-end surfing lodge with on-site teaching has opened in Peniche, one of Portugal's most renowned surfing spots.	Portugal	Surf Waves	#portugal #surf #surfdestination #bigwaves #portugaladventurous	Twitter Instagram Facebook YouTube Weblogs dedicated to surf
12	At the awards "The Best of the Year" by the WINE magazine, the city of Porto was distinguished as "Best Gastronomy Destination	Portugal Porto Northern Portugal	Wine tourism Port Wine Gastonomic destination Enhance traditional food spots	#portwine #winedestinations #porto #portugal #portugalgastronomy #visitnorthernportugal	Twitter Facebook Weblogs Mobile apps Integrated booking platforms

	2013"				
13	25 Most Photographed Cities in Europe Douro River in northern Portugal, prized for both its natural and architectural beauty.	Porto Lisbon Northern Portugal	Douro River Douro Valley Multipack Regional and city touring Nature Landscape Architecture	#portwine #winedestinations #porto #portugal #portugalgastronomy #visitnorthernportugal	Twitter Facebook Instagram
14	There is much to discover in Europe's most westerly country, for while golfers and sunseekers flood to the southerly Algarve, swathes of the rest of Portugal remain unexplored.	Lisbon Narrow streets Sintra greener landscape, heartier food and heavy granite architecture Porto Coimbra Alentejo white-washed, blue-rimmed houses Algarve	Music (boost Fado as an asset) Fado is the Portuguese soul Music Gastronomy White Wine Fish Healthy food destination Multipack Regional and city touring	#lisbon #yellowtrams #sintra #sintraarchitecture #algarve #portugal #sun #beach #whitealentejo #alentejo #alentejomedieval #healthyfood in #portugal #fishparadise	Twitter Facebook Instagram YouTube Mobile apps to support Fado music sharing

Source: own elaboration based on results achieved by using ATLAS.ti 7.0.
*Following the order of Table 2. ** Traveller/Tourist-Generated Content.

4.9. Discussion and reflections

This study content analysed 20 publications and presented detailed digital strategies to deal with 14 that could inspire Visit Portugal and the Regional Entity of Tourism of Porto and Northern Portugal. But is Visit Portugal - the national tourism authority - or the Regional Entity of Tourism of Porto and Northern Portugal - integrating content generated by travel bloggers, travel journalists and normal visitors into their campaigns or strategies? The literature highlights that it is wise to engage travellers and strategically integrate the content they generate into the whole destination branding effort (Wang *et al.*, 2002). In addition to the analysis of the content of the mentioned 20 links, the

authors follow Visit Portugal official Facebook page (https://www.facebook.com/Visitportugal) and Visit Portugal official Twitter account https://twitter.com/visitportugal, and the authors have noticed a permanent sharing of the mentioned links and the application of hashtags in key content. In addition, there is consistency between sources and both, and the Facebook page and Twitter account keep the same layout and the content is shared simultaneously.

There is a considerable interaction after posting one of the analysed weblogs (Table 4.2.) and the "normal/average visitor", which is the biggest challenge in destination branding in today's digital environment. Discussing the findings (Tables 4.2. and 4.3.), which could inspire Visit Portugal and generally other DMOs, the main cities of the country were identified more frequently and their tourism potential revealed (that is, Porto, Lisbon, Coimbra and Braga). However, cities as Braga (post number 8), Sintra (posts 8 and 14) and Madeira (posts 6, 7 and 8) and Azores Island (posts 4, 7 and 8) also deserve special comments from bloggers and reviewers.

The Portuguese gastronomy and the variety of wines, such as Port Wine, White Wine and Madeira Wine are often described for its excellence and quality (but are they part of the national strategy for tourism? – chapter 6 will provide some clarifications on this matter). Wines are a highly competitive field and in case of the Portuguese wines one of the main challenges is that they are too well known but in a limited range. For example, Port and Madeira Wine have strong brands, especially in UK, but only for a limited range of wines. The recent achievements of Porto as the best European destination 2013 (see post 10, Table 4.2., page 14) was several times reported and links shared (with large engagement through Facebook likes and Twitter retweets). At this point, it is also fundamental to underline that those publications, shared through a web link, facilitate sharing platforms where the reader can also spread the content through their one social network (the e-word-of-mouth effect).

The posting and sharing processes value traveller/tourism content, despite the fact that Visit Portugal can develop this exercise by applying content analysis (in a larger scale than in this chapter) and taking the content as the heart of the destination branding process. The traveller generated content supports targeting niche markets and the co-creation of the brand. Although ICTs and the content shared throughout the Internet are not necessarily a source of sustainable competitive advantage, its integration into tourism organizations is one of the key to success as discussed in Gretzel *et al.* (2000) cited in Buhalis and Matloka (2013).

The research findings have shown that the content generated by those who interact with destination Portugal belong either to professional bloggers or to "normal/average visitors". Content analysis can be used to identify and understand the way tourists/travellers perceive Portugal/northern Portugal as tourist destinations. Tourists/travellers are opinion makers and storytellers with access to a plethora of information communication technologies to act as co-creators of brands (for example weblogs, blogs, virtual communities and social networking sites). Tourists and travellers are the new architects/creators of the destination brand. Therefore, it is recommended that the tourism sector takes a much more active role in engaging with them, for instance analysing their perceived emotions, desires or past experiences, and facilitating platforms upon which tailored, context sensitive and co-created offering can be developed (Moutinho *et al.*, 2013).

As the main contribution of this chapter goes to Visit Portugal and Regional Entity of Tourism of Porto and Northern Portugal, they are recommended to look on the Internet to find the backbone for a potential destination brand to position Portugal as tourist destination. Tables 4.2. and 4.3. show only a small part of a large number of publications where Portugal was mentioned. It means that travellers who experience Portugal are generating content about it. The DMO Visit Portugal and the Regional Entity of Tourism of Porto and Northern Portugal, can embrace their narratives, comments, opinions, suggestions, positive and negative aspects in favour of a strong, effective and customized brand. Although those narratives can contradict the National Strategic Plan for Tourism 2013-2015 (Tourism of Portugal, 2012), the Internet offers dynamic tools for tailored programmes and products.

Overall, the findings provide a preliminary foundation for future research to investigate how travel websites, travel blogs and tourist experts refer to Portugal as a tourism destination. Content analysis attempts to reach a better understanding of which products are enhanced and to compare with the national tourism strategy.

4.10. Conclusions

4.10.1. What image is coming across about Portugal, in comparison with other places?

This chapter allows me to emphasise the confusing image of gastronomy, wine, beaches and cities Portugal holds. In addition is not clear the image associated to northern Portugal. One can conclude that the image of the country and the region are weak and have multiple focuses. A regional branding strategy has to work with that reality and to shape the image and contribute to make it more strong, consistent and accurate. Is important to relay on the content generated by average/non-professional travellers, professional traveller bloggers and travel journalists who post, comment and share information in social media channels – they are co-creators of place brands.

4.10.2. Content generated by average/non-professional travellers, professional traveller bloggers and travel journalists in a regional branding strategy: final remarks

Content generated by average/non-professional travellers, professional traveller bloggers and travel journalists who post or comment and share information in social media channels is the biggest digital challenge posed to the branding process of destinations, as the authors have argued following the literature.

This chapter concludes that tourist/traveller-generated content could support the design of a destination branding for places, such as Portugal or northern Portugal as tourist destinations. With the economic and financial breakdown, tourism destinations, as Portugal, have less funding for luxury in destination branding and further sophisticated online marketing campaigns. Tourism-oriented publications are all around and free. Therefore, tourism organizations can build their online presence through social media where they are invited to present themselves to an audience without costs. Tourism Australia and Visit Sweden are doing it well, as exemplified. The ultimate goal is to meet travellers' expectations (that is, before, during and after the visit), travellers' experiences, including experiences from expert travellers (for example travel bloggers and travel journalists) and the content/narratives they have generated.

Efficient destination branding depends upon a strong, visionary leadership, a brand-oriented organizational culture, compatible partnerships, departmental coordination and process alignment. Coherent communication with the destination stakeholders is vital. The digital domain has emphasized the co-creational process of territorial brands in general and, at the same time, made participation in this process more freely available and more desirable. Moreover, ICTs give DMOs the tools to facilitate a virtual dialogue between residents and tourists before they arrive in and after their departure from the destination. Pre and after-trip interactions enrich tourists' virtual experience, enhance their destination image through strong virtual presence and cultivate their loyalty toward the destination. This is where DMOs must play a more active role in designing, facilitating and monitoring experiences across destination participants and touch points.

This chapter, however, concludes that instead of extending their brand communications to the World Wide Web by simply digitizing the logos, tag lines and other elements, tourism destinations, including Portugal, can build consistent place branding strategies, for instance at the regional level, digitally in an Internet-mediated environment where virtual experience takes place. Co-created place/destination brands are the future successful stories. Tourists and travellers can be animated to co-create the brand content and support the destination branding process (the content of the final output will be the result of the content generated by travellers and interested public opinion). This in turn increases the chances that consumers will share the content with their own social networks – the high-tech traveller will only respond to trustworthy, perceived as authentic brands, thereby increasing the reach and visibility of the destination brand, which Visit Portugal has been doing it.

This research, the methodology employed, opens up new perspectives on the digital challenges in destination branding trends that could warrant future conceptual inquiries and empirical investigations. It sheds some light on digital strategic thinking on destination branding literature, with particular focus on Portugal. This chapter is a pioneer in applying content analysis to integrate content, engage travellers and co-create brands for places. However, as future research the number of webpages and weblogs should be extended. In addition, future research could also employ in-depth interviewing or focus groups with destination marketers and managers on how to integrate the results of social media content analysis on their destination branding exercises. Another real future challenge is not so much about the gathering of data from wider and wider sources, like in this chapter, but knowing what to do with such data once we have I. For instance, update policy documents, strategic initiatives or design place branding initiatives aligned with strategic spatial planning goals in which tourism emerge as a strategic domain.

The next chapter (chapter 5) critically explores the role of place branding, specifically at the regional scale (specifically northern Portugal region), as an instrument for the attainment of strategic spatial planning goals. It also aims to contribute to the academic debate on regional branding by discussing its relevance and effectiveness in supporting economic and social spatial realignment through civic participation/civic engagement and the shaping of clearly envisioned agreed futures.

Chapter 5: Theoretical framework of the study - place branding as strategic spatial planning instrument and its application to the case study based on regional actors perspective over a regional branding strategy for northern Portugal (NUTS II)

Chapter overview

The present chapter critically explores the actual or potential roles of place branding, specifically at the regional scale, as an instrument for the attainment of strategic spatial planning goals. It complements the arguments presented in previous chapters and builds the theoretical framework of the study. The chapter also discusses the relevance and effectiveness of place branding in supporting economic and social spatial realignment through civic and institutional participation and the shaping of clearly envisioned, agreed, social responsible and realistic futures. This chapter's theoretical exploration is developed by detailing relevant findings from a case study on the significance of a regional branding initiative, integrated in a wider planning strategy for northern Portugal. In conducting this exploratory research, primary data were gathered through sixteen in-depth interviews with key-regional actors. In addition, a detailed analysis of the current strategic spatial planning documents is also provided. Findings show the key-strategic domains in which the region excels. These domains could fuel a potential regional brand as a way to overcome deep-seated regional constraints and limitations. The strategic planning documents in force, however, have not yet been successful in dealing with place branding, for instance at the regional scale. By drawing the attention of scholars, practitioners and policy-makers towards place branding as an instrument of strategic spatial planning, the chapter sheds light on the challenges of branding regions, contributing, thus to frame this thesis and influence the discussions going forward.

5.1. Introduction

Some of the misalignments in place branding literature seem particularly evident at the regional scale. For instance, Ikuta *et al.* (2007) touched upon the significant lack of attention to regional branding. Pasquinelli and Teräs (2013) argue that place branding researchers could reflect more on regions that struggle in building a reputation and gaining visibility, while Zimmerbauer (2011) states that "regions on various spatial scales, are almost obliged to engage in promotion, as they are seen to be competing against each other nationally and increasingly also globally" (p. 256). Recently, Zenker and Jacobsen (2015) argue that "scholars have devoted considerable attention to the role of place branding at the city and country levels, but the regional level has thus far been largely neglected" (p. vii).

The theoretical assumption postulated in this chapter is grounded by taking the region of northern Portugal, a region devoid of autonomous government and supported in terms of regional development and cohesion by the North Regional Coordination and Development Commission (CCDRN), as a case study. To properly bridge the theoretical component of the chapter and the empirical work, two qualitative methods of data collection and analysis were employed. First, primary data were gathered through 16 in-depth, semi-structured interviews with key-regional actors and organizations with a stake (and expertise) in the region. I have requested them to comment

specifically upon a potential regional branding strategy integrated as an instrument in wider strategic spatial planning. Secondly, an analysis of the Regional Spatial Plan (PROT), the Northern Portugal Strategic Guidelines/Operational Programme 2014-2020 and the Northern Portugal Smart Specialization Strategy 2014-2020, both for the period coincident with the EU multiannual financial framework 2014 to 2020 and the regional promotion initiative "Be Smart. Go Norte", created and operationalized by the CCDRN, is also provided. The purpose of this documental analysis is to obtain a profound understanding of how place branding has been approached (or not) in the current strategic spatial planning documents, prepared in line with Portugal 2020 strategy and to give spatial and sectoral guidance to the regional actors and organizations.

The reasons to undertake Portugal, specifically its northern region, as a case study are twofold. First, as this is an exploratory study, which attempts to link place branding and strategic spatial planning, it is imperative to understand those current and potential links within a spatial context. Secondly, this study is at the heart of a four-year research project aiming at debating regional branding initiative for northern Portugal by embracing a strategic spatial planning approach and employing a qualitative methodology. By employing a qualitative method of research, this chapter not only addresses the need to conduct additional empirical studies to enrich the analysis of the linkage between place branding and strategic spatial planning, as signalled by Oliveira (2015b), but also responds to the request by Kavaratzis (2012), Ashworth *et al.* (2015), Stubbs and Warnaby (2015) and Kavaratzis and Kalandides (2015) to open an effective dialogue with regional actors in place branding processes. In addition, Zenker and Jacobsen (2015), in a recent publication covering the topic of interregional place branding, argue that qualitative methods have the advantage over the quantitative ones, of open questions which allow researchers to explore unique regional qualities and assets.

In case of this study, and following the lack of studies on place branding undertaken Portugal and its regions as research areas of investigation (as reported by Oliveira, 2015b and in chapter 3), the application of qualitative interviews and documental analysis are particularly relevant to gain deep knowledge, not only over the region-specific constrains and limitations, but also over the unique region-qualities and assets (the content of a place brand) that are strategic in nature and could fuel a potential place brand for the region of northern Portugal.

The chapter proceeds as follows. First, it will clarify the authors' understanding of strategic spatial planning and place branding to further debate the intertwining between the two concepts. Secondly, it discusses the key findings withdraw from the in-depth interviewing and the documental analysis. Finally, the implications and challenges of such an approach for scholarly and praxis debate on place branding and strategic spatial planning, specifically at the regional scale, are presented.

5.2. The intertwining relation between place branding and strategic spatial planning

Place branding, has not been successful in exploring the linkage with spatial planning strategies as I have extensively debated in chapter 1 and 2. Furthermore, Kavaratzis and Ashworth (2010) convincingly state that the non-spatial thinking of many observers and practitioners who work in the field of place branding has led to misunderstandings in terms of the spatial-economic and socio-spatial implications of place branding. With regard to the dialectical relation between place branding

and spatial planning, Van Assche and Lo (2011) argue that there remains an extensive ground to research existing and potential links between spatial planning and place branding. Andersson (2015) goes on and advocates that spatial processes affect place branding and understand this is important to conceptually comprehend place branding.

Following Ashworth *et al.* (2015) and Van Assche and Lo (2011) rationale, this section debates the intertwining relation between place branding and strategic spatial planning. First, it will define the strategic spatial planning approach, by highlighting its evolution in Portugal. Secondly, it also presents my approach to place branding, with particular emphasis at the regional scale. Finally, it withdraws the key theoretical definitions to further construct a theoretical model for branding regions which will be tested on the empirical part of the chapter.

5.3. Defining the strategic spatial planning approach and its evolution in Portugal

It has been widely debated that cities and regions, including the region of northern Portugal (see, for example, Oliveira, 2014a; 2015c), are faced by a complex range of challenges that can no longer be addressed and managed adequately with the traditional intellectual apparatus and mindset (Albrechts, 2015a, 2010c). As a consequence, spatial planning and spatial planners must reflect on the adequate approaches and instruments to cope with the challenges and improve the quality of life for all citizens (Oliveira, 2015b). Strategic spatial planning, a concept which genesis dates back to the 1970s and 1980s (see, for example, Hillier and Healey, 2010), takes an integrated approach to the development of a territory (Healey *et al.*, 1999), to be a means of overcoming the temporal and often spatial limitations and rigidities of traditional/statutory planning, basically concerned with the location, intensity, and harmonization of land development (Albrechts, 2010a). It has also been advocated as possible way of overcoming the limitations of "planning on paper" (Balducci *et al.*, 2011, p. 7), by confronting the contemporary social, spatial, and economic needs of cities and regions, and present a comprehensive vision of the future (envisioning), on the basis of shared and realistic values (Ogilvy, 2002).

Strategic spatial planning (as with place branding), is not an enchanted solution and does not flow smoothly from one phase to another. It is a dynamic process that demands a high degree of concentration on key socio-spatial constrains. According to Albrechts and Balducci (2013), the strategic approach in spatial planning seeks to resolve conflict, eliminate exclusion, and neutralize power relations; for that it must involve relevant regional actors/organizations and concrete activities of citizens and policy-makers. Strategic spatial planning is also relevant in pursuit of "spatial policy for a region in such a way that the components of that policy reinforce each other, also that they take account of the characteristics of the region" (Healey *et al.*, 1999, p. 338).

Strategic spatial planning is also "a transformative and integrative public sector, co-productive, socio-spatial process through which visions or frames of reference, the justification for coherent actions and the means for implementation are produced. These shape, frame and reframe what a place is and what it might become" (Albrechts, 2013, p. 52). As a summary, and in line with Healey *et al.* (1999), Healey (2007; 2009), Balducci *et al.* (2011), Pasqui (2011), Albrechts (2010a; 2013; 2015a), and Albrechts and Balducci (2013), the strategic spatial planning approach is focused on:

- Identifying region-specific qualities, assets, and key regional strategic domains - social, cultural, productive, intellectual and physical;
- Addressing issues that really matter in the day-to-day life of communities;
- Enabling structural change in an transformative, integrative, creative, and innovative way;
- Involving/engaging with key regional actors, civic society, institutions and support the co-production of equal, just and fair spatial planning strategies;
- Envisioning agreed, hopefully better, and realistic futures in a more hybrid mode of democracy and multilevel governance that is open to diversity, equity, in which local and expert knowledge and values are combined towards an imagined alternative future.

The introduction of strategic spatial planning in several European countries (see, for several examples, Hillier and Healey, 2010; Cerreta *et al.*, 2010), has been envisaged as an opportunity for innovation in planning, beside the prevailing traditional planning practices (Castro and Nogueira, 2011). Strategic spatial planning in Portugal, however, is still in its "infancy stage" (Rosa Pires, 2005, p. 237) and is a relatively recent phenomenon (Castro and Nogueira, 2011), despite the early establishment of spatial planning institutions in the country as I have previously mentioned in this thesis. Moreover, spatial planning at the country (Portugal) and regional levels has been dominated by the blueprint approach and is largely focused on urban planning (Rosa Pires, 2005; Giannakourou, 2005), as well as land use planning (Ferrão and Mourato, 2011). In addition, there is little theoretical debate on the ideas and the mission of spatial planning in Portugal (Ferrão and Mourato, 2011; Baptista, 2012).

Despite the reality that the Portuguese spatial planning scholarship has been seldom developed, spatial planning policy and spatial plan making have evolved from a physical, normative and static view of regulation of land use - to a more strategic, comprehensive, and procedural vision of territorial development (Ferrão, 2010). With the "Europeanisation" of spatial planning in Portugal (see on this debate Mourato, 2011), the principles, visions and concepts adopted in the European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP) and the implementation of strategic spatial planning ideas in European cities, such as in Barcelona in 1992, had influenced the spatial planning practice in Portugal, as argued by Ferrão and Mourato (2012).

As a matter of fact, the combination of these and others factors, such as the operationalization of the European Spatial Planning Observation Network (ESPON), have contributed for a more strategic nature of spatial plans, particularly at the regional scale (Ferrão and Mourato, 2012). Following the work by Oliveira (2015b) and the suggestions provided by some of the regional actors interviewed for the purpose of this study, the current strategic spatial planning documents at the regional level are later analysed and the links with place branding, a concept debated in the next section, explored.

5.4. Defining place branding through strategic spatial planning

The definition of place branding this chapter and Ph.D. thesis brings forward stands for a more strategic spatial planning oriented approach to the application of branding principles to cities and regions. Is a definition, that not only responds to Oliveira's (2015a; 2015d) call to bring a more geo-spatial thinking in place branding, but also attempts to support the search for ways in which place branding "could and should advance in order to become more effective, more efficient, more socially responsible and more grounded in theory" as Ashworth *et al.* (2015, p. 3) suggests.

Some scholars (see, for example, Ashworth and Kavaratzis, 2010; Kavaratzis et al., 2015) have been discussing, and often questioning, the social responsibility of place branding initiatives. This because governments often encounter the "fascination" of branding places by clearly wasting public founds/tax payers' money on promotional strategies for their jurisdictional places. However, those place promotion strategies - *per si* - generate little impact upon communities and their well-being. In addition, place promotion has proven to be fruitless for changing global perceptions of a place, and does not attempt to make effective structural changes in order to improve the socio-spatial and spatial economic condition of places, nor does it contribute to the well-being of citizens or to the attainment of strategic spatial planning goals.

The approach to place branding made here tries to break the business and mainstream branding and marketing sphere which, according to Andersson (2015), Skinner (2008) and Hanna and Rowley (2008), stills dominates the place branding discourse by bringing a more spatial consciousness to the process. As place branding involves spatial-functional, organizational, and financial measures (Ashworth and Voogd, 1990), that are meant to make better places to live, work, study, invest or visit, as with strategic spatial planning, this approach to place branding aims to highlight the fact that the concept is not simply about communicating to the world that a certain place is "good" or "better" - rather, is more about pursuing better social and economic patterns and let the world know that authorities and organizations are trying to improve and structurally change the socio-spatial and spatial-economic condition ideally in a participatory or co-production process.

As strategic spatial planning is an active force in enabling change as well as a transformative practice (see Albrechts, 2010a, 2013) a more spatial planning oriented attitude defends that place branding and place brands, must be primarily oriented towards the support of local business, improve infrastructures and the physical condition of the territory, provide health and educational services, contribute to job creation as well as job maintenance and talent retention - rather than be focused mainly on attracting investment, tourists, and highly qualified workers. In addition, place branding as an instrument of the strategic spatial planning approach could be effective in empower actors to work together to achieve strategic goals, or co-produce collective visions about the future and how to get there.

The approach in debate in this chapter would be particularly challenging at the regional scale as according to Zenker and Jacobsen (2015) branding regions is more complex than branding cities and countries which requires mature strategic thinking (as argued in Oliveira, 2015e). The first aim of regional branding is to create a perception of one geographical entity in the minds of the target audiences. A difficult task, as regions are composed of a considerable number of cities and towns, a multiplicity of regional actors and diverse assets, attributes and qualities. In addition, some regions

have autonomous governments, while others depend on political and jurisdictional decisions of central governments, as the case of the mainland Portuguese regions. The second aim is to transfer positive associations from the single entities, as the different cities and towns - to the regional brand. This effort is often undertaken in order for single locations to compensate for their shortcomings and lack of human and financial resources and join forces to accomplish their greater goals. However, there remains the challenge of bringing all regional actors to joining forces, procedures and tools around a single regional story brand and regional brand. Effective spatial planning strategies in which place branding is integrated as an instrument could contribute to align ideas, interests, solve conflicts and bring legitimacy to the planning and branding processes.

An example of a regional branding initiative is useful here. As reported by Zenker and Jacobsen (2015), the city of Hamburg markets itself as a - region - to consumers in China and India. In branding Hamburg as a region, it effectively raises its size from two million to nearly five million inhabitants. And in this German region, both, the population size and territorial dimension, play an important role to communicate its status as an important trade partner for India and China, for instance. In addition, social constrains, such as of affordable housing and industrial space, in tandem with the absence of rural nature and "small town charm" of Hamburg urban area, have been compensated for by adding smaller regions, towns and rural areas around the city centre thus contribute to strengthen the Hamburg regional brand – while explores synergies with the city brand. Hence, small partners and places around the city would benefit from joining the regional branding initiative, since they can compensate for their lack of (international) visibility, awareness, complex infrastructure, and perceived connectivity.

The definition of regional branding postulated in this chapter also takes into account insights from the work of Van den Berg and Braun (1999), who have stressed the importance of "organizing capacity" in place branding, which is defined as, "the ability to enlist all actors involved and, with their help, to generate new ideas and to develop and implement a policy designed to respond to fundamental developments and create conditions for sustainable development" (p. 995); it is a definition that also draws on the idea of co-production brought to the strategic spatial planning debate by, among other, Albrechts (2013, 2015a) as a way to guarantee the use of local and expert knowledge and ensure that planning and branding processes are both responsive, well informed, just and fair.

Place brands are thought to have the capability of providing something for everybody, only when, and precisely because, they are created by everybody. In line with Van Dijk and Holstein (2007, p. 14), "branding turns the traditional planning world upside down, by taking the perspectives and experiences of residents as a starting point" to design a unique brand. In the same line of reasoning, Ashworth *et al.*, (2015) argues that "place brands are better thought of as narratives or place stories" (p. 5), thus regional brands must be steeped in community stories – participatory/co-produced place brands. Moreover, the opinions and perspectives from regional actors can "assist and complement theoretical development" (Ashworth *et al.*, 2015, p. 1) as well as "understanding who they are and the nature of their opinions about the place in question should be key determinants of any branding strategy" (Stubbs and Warnaby, 2015, p. 101). Bearing in mind the abovementioned

definition of place branding, a theoretical framework is drawn in Figure 5.1. as an attempt to summarize the intertwining between place branding and strategic spatial planning.

5.5. Theoretical framework of the study: place branding as strategic spatial planning instrument an analysis at the regional scale

The theoretical framework of this study translates the approach to place branding debated in the previous sections, specifically at the regional scale (Figure 5.1.). Is a framework composed of 2 layers around its centre. The first layer highlights six key components in which a region must focuses while designing a regional branding strategy and the second layer highlights what would be achieved if that regional branding initiative is operationalised as strategic spatial planning instrument (the blue colour links the centre and the second layer of the framework). A regional branding strategy integrated as an instrument in strategic spatial planning must begin by:

(i) A focus on a region's qualities, strategic domains, assets and attributes - Albrechts and Balducci (2013) underline that strategic spatial planning focuses on place-specific qualities and assets;

(ii) A focus on addressing regional economic, social and political constraints - Balducci *et al.* (2011) argues that strategic spatial planning is capable of generating images, frames, addressing spatial issues, and helping to change public agendas;

(iii) A focus on enabling and communicating structural change - Albrechts (2013) argues that strategic spatial planning is able to support strategic change (for example, from a traditional industrial region to a more technologically-oriented one) and could be effective in changing the spatial agenda and thus socially and economically improving places.

(iv) A focus on involving/engaging key regional actors and civic society - In line with Habermas (1993), strategic planning is able to generate "strategic conviction" - which means key-actors coming together to develop content and strategies for the management of spatial change. Spatial planners would play a role as catalysts and initiators of that spatial change (Albrechts, 1999). According to Eshuis *et al.*, 2014, place branding requires civic and institutional engagement and Kavaratzis (2012) argues that participation in regional branding initiatives legitimizes the regional brands and deeply influences their meaning;

(v) A focus on envisioning shared, better, and realistic futures - Ashworth *et al.* (2015) argued that "place brands provide strategic guidance for place development" and can be "used as an instrument for envisioning an aspirational imagined future" (p. 4), which seems to play well with the focus on what ought to be debated in strategic spatial planning, brought, for example, by Healey (2006b), Balducci *et al.,* (2011), Albrechts and Balducci, (2013), Albrechts (2015a);

(vi) A focus on reinforcement of sense of belonging and regional feelings - According to Clifton (2011) and Zimmerbauer (2011), regional brands are also thought to boost sense of belonging, as

well as strengthen regional feelings of pride and commitment to the region if the regional branding initiative involve/engage with civic society and regional actors/institutions.

The second layer of the framework demonstrates that a regional brand that strive for synergies with strategic spatial planning and focused in those six vectors - would be effective in supporting economic and social spatial realignment and the shaping of clearly envisioned agreed and realistic futures. In addition, would also be able in fostering investment attraction, increase tourism revenues, support local business, attract and maintain talent people and inhabitants, support job creation and its maintenance (the dashed line informs that interactions between the sectors/vectors can occur). As abovementioned, the theoretical exploration of this framework is conducted by taking northern Portugal as case study.
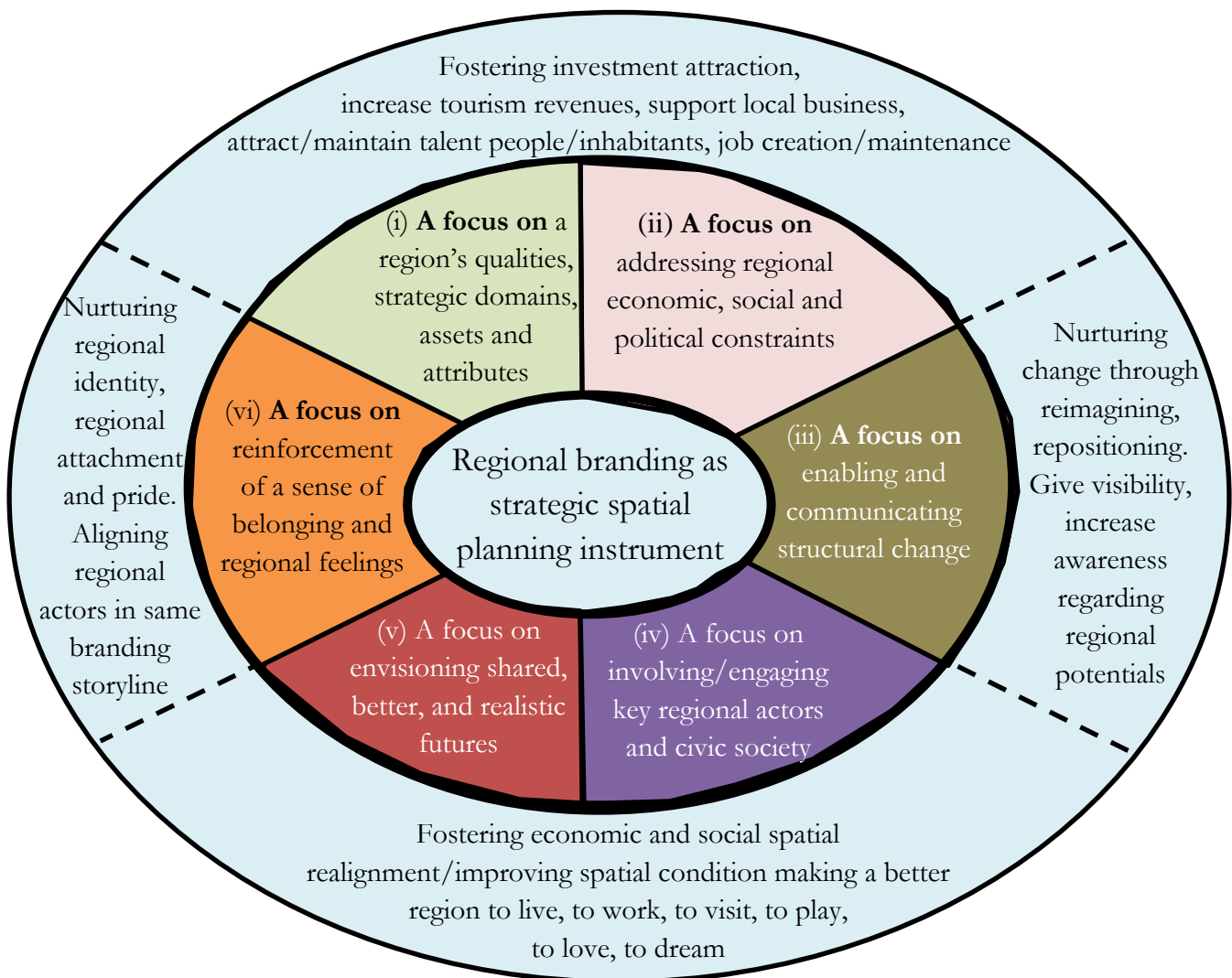
Figure 5.1. The theoretical framework of the study. *Source*: own elaboration.

5.6. In-depth interviews with key regional actors* of northern Portugal

This chapter details the results of in-depth, open-ended, semi-structured interviews conducted with 16 key regional actors and organizations involved in regional planning and development of northern Portugal, as well as in regional strategic spatial plan and policy-making:

- IN 1 - North Regional Coordination and Development Commission (regional planning expert);
- IN 2 - North Regional Coordination and Development Commission (policy advisor);
- IN 3 - Regional Entity of Tourism of Porto and Northern Portugal;
- IN 4 - Regional Development Agency of the Ave Valley;
- IN 5 - European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation Galicia-northern Portugal;
- IN 6 - Health Cluster Portugal;
- IN 7 - Textile and Clothing Association of Portugal;
- IN 8 - University of Minho (Vice-rector for Knowledge Enhancement);
- IN 9 - Department of Economics, School of Economics and Management, University of Minho (Professor of Economics);
- IN 10 - Department of Economics, School of Economics and Management, University of Minho (Professor of Economics);
- IN 11 - Department of Civil Engineering, School of Engineering, University of Minho (Professor of Urban and Regional Planning);
- IN 12 - Geography Department, Social Sciences Institute, University of Minho (Professor of Geography);
- IN 13 - Quaternaire Portugal - Corporate society working on Strategic Spatial Planning;
- IN 14 - A member of the business community (transports agency);
- IN 15 - A member of the civic society;
- IN 16 - PortugalFoods;

(*see also Introduction chapter and appendix C for the full list of details of key regional actors of northern Portugal interviewed).

The literature in both fields clarifies the dire need to engage and carefully consider those to whom a spatial planning strategy (Cerreta *et al.*, 2010) and a regional branding strategy (Kavaratzis *et al.*, 2015) must serve - the territory and those interacting with it.

The selection of the respondents started as a process of "convenience sampling" (Neuman, 2011, p. 267) as a result of knowledge gained in previous studies in which northern Portugal was also taken as a case study (see Oliveira, 2011) and continued as a snowball sampling. Interviews were carried out at the interviewees' workplaces from March 2014 to February 2015, with two conducted online, and lasted around one hour. They were all carried out in Portuguese, digitally recorded, and were subsequently fully transcribed with the key-parts translated into English by the author. The interviewees (IN) were asked to respond the following set of questions aimed at give empirical significance to the theoretical framework presented in Figure 5.1.:

(1) Identify and justify the existing regional qualities, strategic domains, assets, attractions and attributes, which correspond to the "light green" sector **(i)**;

(2) Identify the current regional economic, social and political constraints and limitations, and the nature of those key issues, which correspond to the "pink" sector **(ii)**;

(3) To comment upon if a regional branding initiative integrated as an instrument in strategic regional planning would be able to support strategic change, which correspond to the "dark green" sector **(iii)**;

(4) To comment upon the key regional actors, experts and organizations that must be involved (in addition to themselves) in a potential regional branding initiative, which correspond to the "purple" sector **(iv)**;

(5) To comment upon if a regional branding initiative integrated as an instrument in strategic regional planning would support the envisioning of better futures for the region, which correspond to the "red" sector **(v)**;

(6) To comment upon if a regional branding initiative would reinforce the sense of belonging and the regional feelings, which correspond to the "orange" sector **(vi)**;

The analysis of the feedback provided by the interviewees was completed with the documental analysis of the abovementioned strategic spatial plans (a; b; c) and promotional initiative (d). Instead of detailing the perspectives of the regional actors who agreed to collaborate in the study, the authors have engaged here with the key opinions and common points between them. Whenever possible, links to the aforementioned literature and to the theoretical framework are here provided.

Regarding the Regional qualities, strategic domains, assets, attractions and attribute I have synthetized the interviewees' opinion in Figure 5.2.:

Northern Portugal qualities, strategic domains, assets, attractions and attributes				
Technical-textiles	Footwear	Tourism	Health-related activities	Agro-food related activities
Technological incorporation in textiles and clothing; Application of nanomaterials; Design and fashion; Synergies with universities	Design and fashion; Tailor-made shoemaking /footwear; Quality of raw materials (for example, leather).	Douro Valley; Built heritage; Traditions/ folk events; Porto city; Religious sites;Peneda-Gerês National Park.	Medical care; Orthopaedic materials; Health tourism; Thermal tourism; Medical textiles; Synergies between universities and pharmaceutical industry.	Gastronomy; Regional wines/Port Wine; Atlantic diet and lifestyle; Quality of raw materials (agro-products). Synergies between universities/researc h unites and food production.

Region-specific branding content for a tailor-made northern Portugal regional brand

Figure 5.2. Summarizing the research findings on the key strategic domains for northern Portugal. *Source*: own design based exclusively on interviewees' opinions (IN 1-16).

Technical-textiles (for example, the application or the incorporation of nanomaterials in new products and focus on the quality of design and follow up with fashion trends), footwear (for example, by investing in tailor-made footwear and follow up with market demands), tourism (northern Portugal has multiple assets that can be optimised as tourism products, however, this has to be accomplished with careful integration with the community needs and values), health-related activities (for example, investing in linking the know-how on textile and clothing with research and development on health sciences), and agro-food (for example, promoting a healthy lifestyle through regional gastronomy and wines) related activities were identified as the key strategic domains that could fuel a potential regional branding strategy. To gain better understanding of the current socio-economic scenario of northern Portugal, the strategic opinions and domains and the approach to regional branding (if any) the current strategic regional planning documents are further analysed.

Regarding regional economic, social and political constraints and limitations the interviewees have commented that despite recent cyclical recovery, a series of deep-rooted regional economic, social and political constraints and limitations prevails in northern Portugal, as in other Portuguese regions (IN 1, 2, 9, 15). The current regional economic, social and political constraints and limitations are structural in their nature (IN 4, 11, 12, 16).

In economic and social terms - the globalization of the economy and trade, the depreciation of exports (IN 10, 15), together with pressing economic and social challenges linger against the backdrop of fiscal austerity (following the government's efforts to bring the budget deficit back in

line with the EU Stability Pact) have dramatically impacted the regional economic scenario, various interviewees argued (IN 3, 5, 6). The region has been suffering with the impacts of the economic and financial crises and current register high unemployment rate, lower purchasing power and depopulation, states IN 2, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12. Northern Portugal currently has the lowest local/municipal purchasing power of the country, argues IN 9, and only the municipalities of Braga and the Metropolitan Area of Porto/Área Metropolitana do Porto stands above the national average. According to Statistics Portugal (INE, 2013b), 7 out of 10 municipalities with the lowest purchasing power per capita were located in northern Portugal (70 per cent). Structural challenges are also related to the specialization of the labour force (IN 9, 15). The low-skilled workforce (IN 12) associated with traditional industry (for example textile, clothing, and footwear) characterize the image of northern Portugal (IN 1, 4, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16).

In political terms - the adoption of a centralized approach to government and public administration, quintessentially top-down in terms of spatial planning, had blocked the application of the subsidiarity principle to regions, stated the interviewee 15. CCDRN, interviewed twice for the purpose of this study, one interview more technically-oriented (IN 1) and a second one politically-oriented (IN 2), has been losing its political intervention capacity and has difficulties in attracting investment for northern Portugal (IN 2, 10, 11). This has been justified as other institutions often set off and lead investment attraction initiatives", argues the interviewee number 2, such as the AICEP (Portugal Global - Trade and Investment Agency) and IAPMEI (Agency for Competitiveness and Innovation). These together with a heavy bureaucracy for example in terms of investment implementation of infra-structure development, a weak judiciary system, fiscal instability, and weak or non-existent decision-making capacity and leadership at the regional level, have been identified as the key political/public administrative constrains (IN 13, 9, 10, 15).

The interviewees hold favourable opinions regarding a potential regional branding initiative integrated as an instrument in strategic regional planning by arguing that it could be an effective path to bring regional actors together. In additional, a regional brand could align municipal interests and place promotional initiatives at the municipal and inter-municipal levels. As a regional strategy would be the roller or would dictate the spatial strategies would open way for a shared regional branding strategy. CCDRN, universities, inter-municipal communities and municipalities must be involved in any regional branding process. The private sector from the identified strategic domains (Figure 5.2.) must also share their ideas towards a northern Portugal brand.

Northern Portugal is only supported in terms of regional planning, development and cohesion by the CCDRN and recently by the inter-municipal communities. CCDRN is charged to execute, at the level of the NUTS II-Northern region, the policies of regional and urban development, environment, territorial management, nature and biodiversity conservation, sustainable use of natural resources, urban requalification, regional strategic planning. In line with these tasks, CCDRN is also responsible for the elaboration and correct implementation of the:

(a) Regional Spatial Plan (PROT) (see CCDRN, 2009);
(b) Northern Portugal Strategic Guidelines/Operational Programme 2014-2020 (see CCDRN, 2014d);

(c) Northern Portugal Smart Specialization Strategy 2014-2020 (see CCDRN, 2014f);

(d) And, among others regional promotional initiatives, is also responsible for the initiative "Be Smart. Go Norte" (or in English – "Be Smart. Go Northern Portugal") (see CCDRN, 2015b).

Despite the self-claimed strategic nature of the above mentioned documents, I acknowledge that these strategic planning documents do not follow strictly what Albrechts (2010a, 2010c), Albrechts and Balducci (2013) and Healey *et al.* (1999), Healey (2007, 2009) consider as strategic spatial plans. However as they are the only documents in force at present, I have decided proceeding with the analysis as I did in chapter 3 of this thesis. The details of the data collection are further presented.

5.7. Analysis of the current strategic regional planning documents

The Regional Spatial Plan (CCDRN, 2009) defines the organizational model of the territory of northern Portugal, by establishing the structure of the urban systems, infrastructure networks and equipment of regional interest. In addition, it defines the objectives and principles to be considered in the location of activities and large public investment, regional policy on the environment, and the guidelines and directives for the spatial regional territory. It is a strategic document that defines the basis for regional development, such as the options to support regional cohesion, competitiveness and sustainability of the natural resources and landscape (p. 2). Despite that the document does not refer directly to regional branding there are references to the:

- Protection of regional products, and the territories where they are produced (p. 16);
- Protection of Port Wine as a world-class product brand (p. 16);
- Developing a regional agenda for the tourism sector, thus enhancing and give visibility to the region as tourist destination by relying on the destination brand – "Porto and The North" (p. 202);

This is an important strategic document for the region and one can argue that it is an important starting point for the integration of a regional branding strategy as an instrument in regional planning. A regional brand, could, thus give visibility to the spatial interventions programmed in the document and communicate, in a consistent and effective way, the region strategic domains to the region and beyond. Moreover, the planning document could be used to align all regional actors in the same regional brand story line. Having said these is important to acknowledge that each municipality can elaborate their own city brands – as the document identities the Municipal Master Plans as the instrument to support place marketing (p. 150). Following Zenker and Jacobsen (2015) argument – a regional brand does not have to eliminate city brands but it could work as an umbrella brand and give to them a regional meaning.

In the Northern Portugal Strategic Guidelines/Operational Programme 2014-2020 – regional branding and regional marketing are absent concepts. The document acknowledged the "Incapacity of the region to retain visitors and the absence of a regional promotional strategy" as one of the

weak points of the region (p. 27). The document also identifies the key strategic domains and regional qualities in which northern Portugal excel (which goes in line with those signalled in Figure 5.3.). Despite that tourism is identified as one of the key domains there are no references, strangely, to the flagship destination brand – "Porto and The North - The essence of Portugal." The document, being strategic at the regional level, offers a profound analysis that could effectively support the integration of a regional branding strategy as an instrument to support the visionary realignments fostering economic restructuring, social inclusion and cohesion, political engagement and participation, the reinforcement of regional identification, and the general long-term well-being of the citizens.

The Northern Portugal Smart Specialization Strategy 2014-2020 (CCDRN, 2014f), a document that offers a thorough analysis to enhance regional competitiveness and positioning, only seldom refers to regional promotion. The document acknowledges the need to reinforce the marketing strategies to boost tourism products and services worldwide (p. 114), only.

The regional promotional initiative - "Be Smart. Go Norte" (or in English - Be Smart. Go Northern Portugal) seems to have emerged to support the Smart Specialization Strategy 2014-20, however, that document does not refer this potential regional branding attempt. This initiative, aims to position the region as a "smart region" – a region that offers "smart business" as well as "smart people", mirroring the investments in research and development in the past years, this combined with a "smart lifestyle". Altogether makes northern Portugal a "smart location", to invest, to visit, to study and to live (see CCDRN, 2015b). Arguable, there is nothing wrong with this aims, however, it seems another promotional campaign yet disarticulated with the abovementioned documents. This is in line with the work by Oliveira (2015b) who argues that there is in Portugal and its regions a "cacophony of taglines (sometimes mutually exclusive) and place promotion approaches without coherent integration and alignment between the different tiers of government" (p. 40).

5.8. Theoretical framework applied to the case study on northern Portugal

Applying the theoretical propositions to the presented case study is possible to argue that northern Portugal holds its region-specific qualities/key-strategic domains. One can also conclude, in line with the key remarks of previous chapters and other statistical indicators explored in chapter 6, that the region is currently facing social and economic imbalances and other territorial struggles that a regional brand could contribute to solve. The theoretical framework (Figure 5.1.) was tested based on the key findings of the case study. In the centre of the framework – Northern Portugal regional branding strategy integrated as an instrument in strategic regional planning – surrounded by six sectors/vectors (Figure 5.3.).

The key-strategic domains (i) as well as the current socio-economic and political constrains (ii) are identified and linked to the possibility of the regional brand would support investment attraction, regional strategies to support local business thus support job creation, by linking key strategic domains with the demand needs. To face the drawback of weak lobbying capacity and communicative power to implement structural change (iii) a regional brand would support the communication of ongoing structural changes and would give visibility and notoriety to the region (internally and externally). Regarding the key regional actors, experts and organizations that must be

involved in a potential regional branding initiative the interviews identified CCDRN as having the means to lead a potential regional branding strategy. However, the Regional Entity of Tourism of Porto and Northern Portugal as well as the universities and research units of the regional must be integrated in the design of a potential regional branding strategy (iv) and synergies with research centres explored.

To harmonize different interests trough civic and institution participation, as well as a perfect coordination with the inter-municipal communities and the 86 municipalities, is need so a regional brand for northern Portugal would be able to support a strategic change, thus create an agreed vision for the future of the region (v). The effects of the current socio-economic scenario seem to have impacted the confidence of the inhabitants in the region's future, the interviews argued (vi). At this level, a regional branding initiative would boost regional identity by focusing in regional unique qualities (tangible and intangible elements).
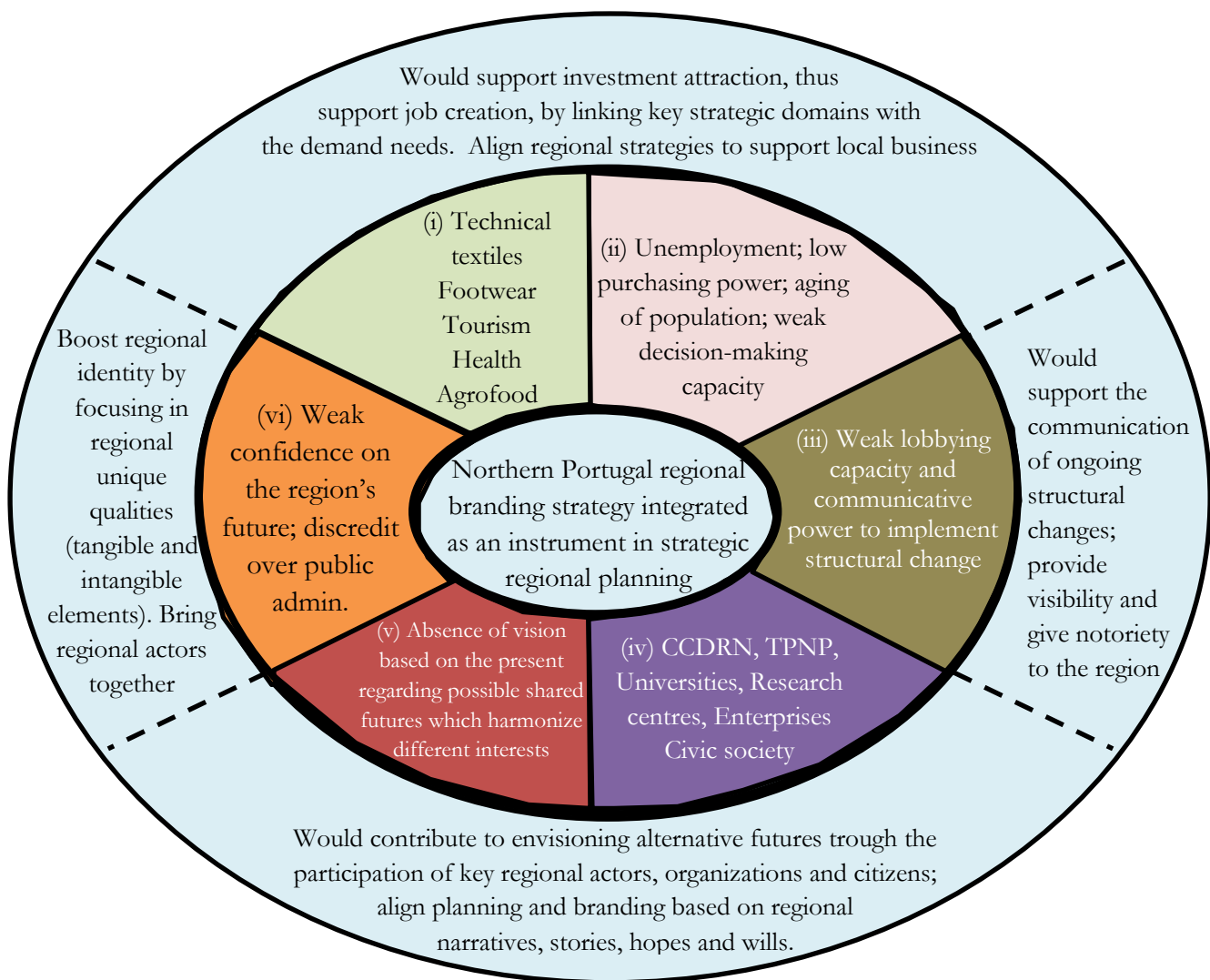
Figure 5.3. Theoretical framework of the study applied to the empirical case.
Source: own design based on Figure 5.1.

This conclusion aims at pointing the ways in which branding, as a strategic planning instrument (as a means), could improve the socio-spatial and spatial-economic conditions (the end). The above discussion is put forward here in the hope that it might steer an interest in the alignment of a potential place branding strategy, independently of the scale of application, and wider spatial planning strategies, and lead to further searches for additional links. This search might lay the foundations of a radical approach towards place branding and strategic spatial planning theory and practice. The purpose of next chapter (chapter 6) is to explore a potential regional branding strategy for the northern part of Portugal, emphasizing one of the key-strategic domains identified in this chapter - tourism.

Chapter 6: Tourism as key strategic domain: the regional actors perspective over the tourism potential of northern Portugal (NUTS II) and its relevance for a regional branding strategy

Chapter overview

In line with the sub-research questions and objectives of this thesis (chapter 1), and bearing in mind tourism as a strategic domain for northern Portugal, this chapter aims to clarify the answers of the following questions: (1) is tourism a strategic domain with the potential to support a regional branding strategy for northern Portugal? (2) is a regional branding strategy an engine to enable economic and social transformation in the region, thus responding to the contemporary challenges such as weak economic confidence and unemployment? To answer these questions, a content analysis on the policy documents: (1) Northern Portugal Strategic Guidelines 2014-2020 and (2) National Strategic Plan for Tourism 2013-2015 has been performed. In addition, the chapter details the results of in-depth interviews conducted with two regional entities: (1) Regional Entity of Tourism of Porto and Northern Portugal (TPNP), in charge of national tourism planning and promotion and (2) North Regional Coordination and Development Commission (CCDRN), involved in regional planning and development. The findings reinforce the importance of tourism as a strategic domain to boost the economy and create momentum in northern Portugal. Moreover, tourism is seen by the respondents as a key objective in a regional branding strategy.

6.1. Introduction

In order to enhance their distinctive features, strategic domains, assets (tangible and intangible), places have long been branding themselves (Hankinson, 2010) and tourism destinations are no exception (Pritchard and Morgan, 1998). This process, known as place branding, has often been used to increase tourism revenues (Ashworth, 2011a). As identified in the earliest literature on place branding (Ashworth and Voogd, 1990; Kotler, *et al.*, 1993), as well as in previous chapters, the three main target groups of a place branding strategy, if any, are residents, companies and visitors. Throughout this chapter, tourism will be the main focus of a potential regional branding strategy to boost the economy and create momentum in northern Portugal.

Tourism has often been seen as a key element in the development of places, which have adopted branding strategies - meant to gain a competitive position and assert their identity - in their communication with potential tourists (Morgan *et al.*, 2011). However, tourism destinations, including Portugal and its regions, are facing an ever-growing array of challenges and opportunities (Fyall *et al.*, 2012). In addition, tourism destinations have been dealing with uncertainty at the environmental, financial, economic and social levels (Oliveira, 2013a). These imbalances demand the exploration of strategic domains and unique/distinctive assets by emphasizing the need for long-term strategic thinking combined with the application of active instruments, which can shape a place into its desired identity (Oliveira, 2015a, 2015b).

Defining a place branding strategy involves strategic analysis. According to Albrechts (1999), a strategic analysis or determining a strategic position for a place is the task of spatial planners in support of policy and decision-makers. Therefore, strategic spatial planners could play an important role in setting up a place branding strategy, which would facilitate the development of perceptions in the mind of potential investors, visitors, as well as tourists (Medway *et al.*, 2011).

Strategic spatial planners, geographers, urban and regional researchers could facilitate the identification of the strategic domains or the potentialities of a place (Albrechts, 1999), including the tourism potential of a place. According to Rainisto (2003) planners are also prepared to establish strategic pathways, social and professional networks with place actors, organizations and communities, thus contributing to developing and reinforcing a place's competitiveness. However, places, including the region of northern Portugal, are facing challenges in their economic, social, and political "puzzle" (Albrechts, 1999). As an attempt to address some of the regional challenges, a branding strategy is likely to be effective as an instrument to enhance the image and reputation of a region, and give it visibility as a whole as well as contribute to the attainment of strategic spatial planning goals. However, such a regional branding strategy is more likely to produce positive results for the territory when grounded in a consistent and integrated process, linked with spatial planning strategies and tourism planning initiatives. According to Van Assche and Lo (2011), the combination of spatial planning and place branding can preserve and create assets in a combination that promises a higher degree of stability.

The purpose of this chapter is to explore a possible branding strategy for northern Portugal, emphasizing its regional tourism potential. As I have previously argued, tourism has been identified by the 16 regional actors interviewed for the purpose of this thesis, as a key-regional strategic domain. This chapter aims to reinforce the strategic advantage of tourism in supporting economic, social and spatial transformation and as a response to the contemporary challenges the region, much like the country, is facing. For instance, financial and economic imbalances, and high levels of unemployment have consequent negative impacts on purchasing power.

This chapter employs a qualitative methodology. An inductive approach was adopted to address the research aims that are subjective in nature and are located within an interpretative paradigm. First, a content analysis was performed on the policy documents:

(1) National Strategic Plan for Tourism 2013-2015 (Tourism of Portugal, 2012);
(2) Northern Portugal Strategic Guidelines/Operational Programme 2014-2020 (CCDRN, 2014d).

Secondly, two in-depth interviews were conducted in March 2014 with representatives of:

(1) Regional Entity of Tourism of Porto and Northern Portugal;
(2) North Regional Coordination and Development Commission.

The chapter is structured as follows; after a brief literature review, the chapter starts by setting out the current economic and social scene, and highlighting the importance of tourism at the national (Portugal) and regional levels (northern part of the country). Further, it will proceed with the current branding attempts in Portugal and with the interviewed entities' perspectives on the relevance of the potential of regional tourism. Final remarks and managerial recommendations are presented in the concluding part.

6.2. Regional branding focused on tourism as a key strategic domain

The focus of this chapter is on the tourism potential of northern Portugal, broadly defined in terms of its contribution to a regional branding strategy. It formulates a place branding definition in the vein of Ashworth's (2011a), Van Assche and Lo's (2011) ideas. According to Ashworth (2011a) only a few other instruments, usually used to manage places, have such a wide range of possible applications, such as flexibility in spatial contexts or responsiveness to change, as place branding has. However, only recently was place branding added to the instrument/tool box of strategic planners and place managers (Ashworth, 2011a). Following the research of Ashworth and Voogd (1990), Kotler *et al.* (1993), Ashworth and Kavaratzis (2010), Hankinson (2010), and Van Assche and Lo (2011), place branding has been shown to better prepare a response to macroeconomic unevenness, general economic and social imbalances, and unemployment (through investment attraction, job creation, boosting tourism). After some theoretical clarifications, regarding the application of branding techniques for tourism purposes, this chapter sets the current status of the Portuguese tourism economy and discusses some of the ongoing challenges at the national and regional levels.

The application of place branding to tourism destinations (for example countries, cities and regions) is identified as destination branding (Pritchard and Morgan, 1998). Regions such as Wales (Pritchard and Morgan, 1998), Western Australia (Crockett and Wood, 2000) and Florida (Brayshaw, 1995) have been branded as well with an emphasis on their tourism potential. However, the line between branding a country, a city, a region or a destination is narrow (Herstein, 2012). Moreover, countries, regions, and cities could be, or have already become tourism destinations and, therefore, apply branding techniques.

According to Buhalis (2000), a destination is a geographical unit which is understood by its visitors as a unique entity, with a political and legislative framework for tourism planning, marketing and branding initiatives. Tourism destinations are inherently complex and a range of social, economic, legal, and technological policies affect their appeal, attractiveness, competitiveness and sustainability (Brent-Ritchie and Crouch, 2011). To be successfully promoted in the targeted markets, a destination is likely to benefit from a favourably differentiated image from its competitors, or positively positioned, in the minds of the consumers and potential visitors. According to Echtner and Ritchie (2003), a key component of this positioning process is the creation, management and communication of a distinctive and appealing image, and one that can be developed by a consistent branding strategy.

The spectacular growth of tourism has had a significant impact on the development of accommodation, transportation, leisure, services and hospitality within a spatial context (Gu and Ryan, 2008; Wilkinson, 2007). Governments and public entities, in several countries, including Portugal had started formulating strategic plans for tourism planning and development by the 1990s (Hall, 1994), particularly for its economic benefit (Oppermann, 1997). However, the territoriality of destinations also changes rapidly with unplanned, informal and uncontrolled tourism dynamics, which often lead to environmental degradation (Loumou *et al.*, 2000) and socio-economic imbalances among citizens (Chai *et al.*, 2009). Hence, it is vital to find the right synergies and to implement branding as a whole process with strategic thinking - and placing the strategic domains'/unique

potential of each territory, such as tourist assets, tangible and intangible elements, landscape and built heritage at the heart of the process.

6.3. Setting the scene for a regional branding strategy for northern Portugal
In Portugal, despite the fact that the tourism sector provides a large amount of the country's GDP and overall employment, while enhancing competitiveness, and generating social impacts, the recent lower indicators of economic growth and current account deficits have characterized the Portuguese economy as a whole. As a consequence, this has influenced the economy of the northern region of the country. According to OECD (2012b) weaknesses in the labour market, reflected by unemployment indicators, have held back productivity making it harder to gain cost competitiveness.

The economic and financial crisis made macroeconomic imbalances unsustainable and the Portuguese economy has embarked on a challenging process of economic adjustment and reform. Exploring the most up to date macroeconomic information (Table 6.1.) from 2008-2014 the real GDP growth averaged at 0.6 per cent and unemployment rate almost doubled (OECD, 2012b, 2014a). In addition, poor export performance led to high external deficits and indebtedness.

Table 6.1. Macroeconomic indicators for Portugal.

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
GDP (USD current PPPs)	26096	26217	26924	26932	27001	27509*	28461*
Real GDP (Annual growth %)	0.2	-3.0	1.9	-1.8	-4.0	-1.6*	0.9*
Inflation rate (Annual growth %)	2.6	-0.8	1.4	3.7	2.8	0.3	-0.3
Unemployment rate (%)	8.8	10.7	12.0	12.9	15.8	16.5	14.1
General Government debt (% of GDP)	82.8	96.1	104.1	107.5	136.3	141.2	149.6
Government deficit (% of GDP)	-3.8	-9.8	-11.2	-7.4	-5.6	-4.8*	-4.5*

Source: own elaboration based on OECD (2012b, 2014a, 2015b) *Estimated value

Despite a growing tax burden, public debt has also increased markedly, reflecting chronic difficulties in managing and controlling public expenditure, of which government-directed investment projects are a good example with consequences for the job market. The national government is resolutely implementing the ambitious three-year EU and International Monetary Fund financial assistance programme of fiscal adjustment and reform (ended in 2014). According to the OECD (2012b), this is fundamental to taking control of the on-going macro-financial adjustment so the situation does not degenerate into a deeper recession. Furthermore, structural reform would be able to support the effort of minimizing the risk of unemployment becoming structural.

Unemployment in Portugal has been one of the main reasons why the incomes of many households have declined during the recent crisis years, which has led to an increase in inequality and poverty reports the OECD (2014a). According to CCDRN (2015a) the unemployment rate in

northern Portugal grew from 7.5 per cent in the 1st quarter of 2005 to 18.6 per cent (in the 1st quarter of 2013) and declined to 14.2 per cent in the 1st quarter of 2015 (see Figure 6.1.). The industrial sector was responsible for the job creation that took place in this period (2013-2015).

The youth employment rate in northern Portugal (15 to 24 years) stood in the 1st quarter of 2014 at 36.5 per cent, a result slightly above the previous quarter (35.7 per cent), but lower than the same quarter of the previous year (39.7 per cent). In the 1st quarter of 2014 northern Portugal registered 291 thousand jobless individuals, representing 54 thousand less than in the same quarter of the previous year (-15.7 per cent) although higher than the values registered across the country. Despite the gap between the unemployment rate at the national and regional levels between the 1st quarter of 2005 and the 1st quarter of 2014, and particularly after 2008, the year of the global economic and financial crises, the difference has narrowed on the 1st quarter of 2015, both, in terms of general unemployment rate and youth unemployment rate (see Figure 6.1.), which demonstrates a slight recover of the economy of northern Portugal (CCDRN, 2015a).

In the 1st quarter of 2015 the employment in northern Portugal registered an increase of 1.1 per cent, which according to CCDRN (2015) was driven mainly by manufacturing and trade and overcoming the result of the previous quarter (0.7 per cent).

Unemployment Rate (2005-15, 1ˢᵗ quarter)

Youth Unemployment Rate (2005-15, 1ˢᵗ quarter)
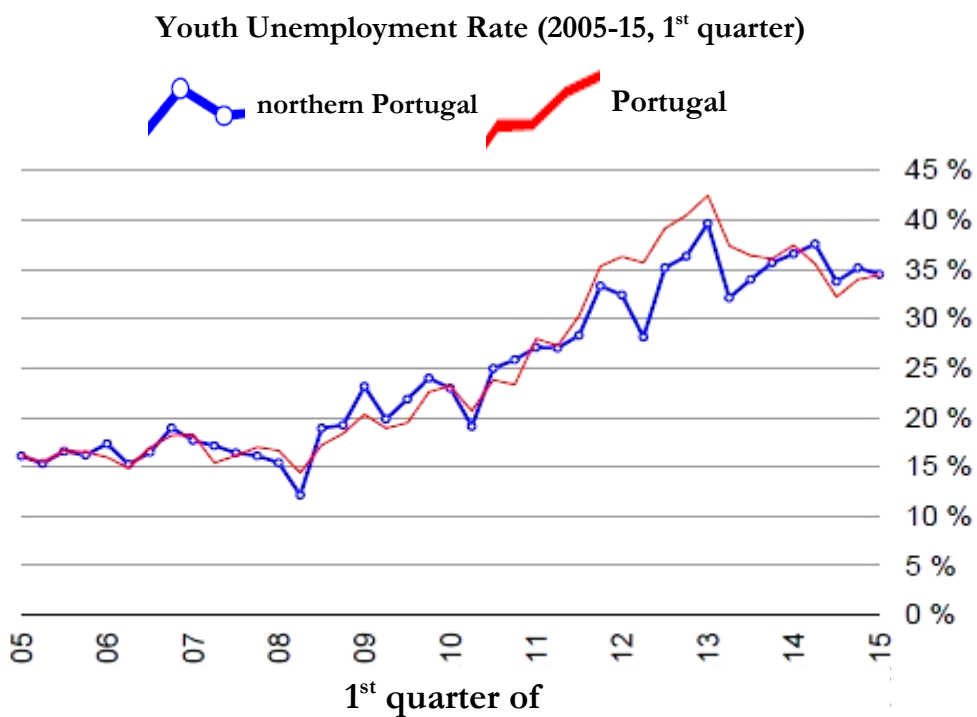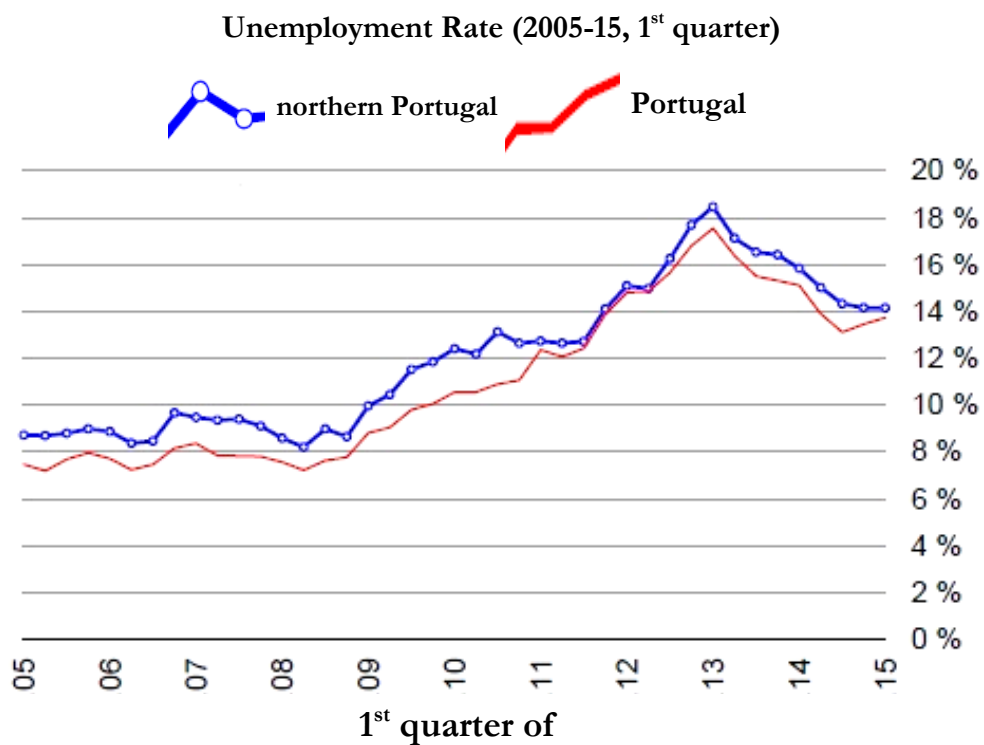
Figure 6.1. Unemployment rate in Portugal and its northern part for the period between 2004 and 2015 (1ˢᵗ quarter of each year). Own elaboration based on CCDRN (2014a, 2015).

According to another source, in this case - Statistics Portugal (INE, 2015) in the 1st quarter of 2015, the unemployment rate was higher than the national average in six regions of the country (Table 6.2.):

(1) Algarve (16.4 per cent);
(2) Autonomous Region of Madeira (15.8 per cent);
(3) Alentejo (15.5 per cent);
(4) Autonomous Region of Azores (14.9 per cent);
(5) Área Metropolitana de Lisboa/Metropolitan Area of Lisbon (14.2 per cent), and
(6) Northern Portugal (14.2 per cent) – altought the second lowest rate.

Only the Centre region registered a rate below the national average (11.1 per cent) and the lowest in the country. The youth unemployment rate in northern Portugal has been following the national tendency registering 34.5 per cent in the 1st quarter of 2015. Unfortunately was not possible to obtain the same indicator of youth unemployment rate for other Portuguese regions (NUTS II) for a comparison.

Table 6.2. Unemployment rate in Portugal and portuguese regions (NUTS II).

Geographical unit	2014		2015
	1st quarter	4th quarter	1st quarter
Portugal	**15.1%**	**13.5%**	↓ **13.7%**
North	**15.8%**	**14.2%**	↓ **14.2% (2nd lowest)**
Centre	11.0%	10.7%	→ 11.1% (lowest)
Área Metropolitana de Lisboa/ Metropolitan Area of Lisbon	16.4%	14.0%	↓14.2% (2nd lowest)
Alentejo	16.0%	14.5%	↓ 15.5%
Algarve	18.3%	14.9%	↓ 16.4%
Autonomous Region of Azores	18.0%	15.5%	↓14.9% (3rd lowest)
Autonomous Region of Madeira	16.4%	15.1%	↓ 15.8%

Source: own elaboration based on Statistics Portugal (INE, 2015). Note: ↓ lower than in 1st quarter of 2014; ↑ higher than in 1st quarter of 2014; → same than in 1st quarter of 2014;

The unemployment impacts the purchasing power of individuals. Another important indicator in this regarding is the average monthly net. According to CCDRN (2014a) in the 1st quarter of 2014 the average monthly net salary in northern Portugal (€744) registered a real decrease of 1.1 per cent compared to the same quarter of 2013. The average monthly net salary in Portugal is €58 higher (€802) than in the northern part of the country. This result translates into an identical change in the nominal wage in conjunction with a zero average rate of inflation in the 1st quarter of 2014. In the previous quarter, the average wage of northern Portugal had retreated 1.4 per cent in real terms. Over the past four quarters of 2014, the average monthly net salary recorded positive annual variations, both in the northern region, and at the national level (CCDRN, 2014a).

In the 1st quarter of 2015, the average monthly net salary in northern Portugal (€755) registered a lightly increase of 1.4 per cent (€11). On the same quarter of 2015 the average monthly net in Portugal registered a real increase of 2.8 per cent (€824).

Key recommendations stated in the Economic Surveys Portugal (OECD, 2012b) held that for the country and its regions, such as the northern region of Portugal, to restore growth, they should reallocate both labour and capital - essentially towards the tradable sectors as well as to find instruments to enhance the key strategic domains, such as tourism (OECD, 2012b). The reallocation of labour means narrowing the gap between - labour-offer and labour-demand as well as adjusts the labour to market needs. This, does not mean more people or more jobs, does mean add labour where is needed. The same OECD (2012b) document states that tourism, technical textiles, shoemaking/footwear and the production of various national wines are key strategic domains to boost the Portuguese economy and contribute to regional development (some of these domains have also been identified in chapter 5 which reveals an interesting fact for the societal relevance of this study).

By looking to the current economic and social scenario, integrating goals, and engaging with regional actors could play a determinant role in fostering job creation and its maintenance, attracting investment, and supporting the export sector as well as contribute to increasing purchasing power of individuals. At this level, and without exaggerated claims from the theoretical way of dealing with spatial issues postulated in this thesis - place branding by emphasizing strategic domains, as tourism - is likely to be effective in creating regional momentum an contribute to improve socio-spatial and spatial-economic condition of northern Portugal. Thus, the output growth will eventually be enhanced while avoiding high unemployment becoming entrenched and threatening. The regions of the country play an important role as well, not only as passive watchers of social and economic dynamics, but rather as mechanisms of national growth and development. According to Paasi and Zimmerbauer (2011), regions are constructs that work as background contexts for social and economic action. Regional strengths, which include tourism, built heritage, landscapes, traditional music, such as folklore, as well as regional gastronomy are part of the northern regional advantage. However, the question remains: can tourism and related sectors become that engine of growth in northern Portugal? The importance of tourism to Portugal and to the country's northern region will be further discussed below.

6.4. The tourism potential of Portugal

In Portugal, tourism is a key growth driver for the national economy and for the social, economic and environmental development of the Portuguese regions (North, Centre, Área Metropolitana de Lisboa/Metropolitan Area of Lisbon, Alentejo, Algarve, Autonomous Region of Madeira and Autonomous Region of Azores), states the National Strategic Plan for Tourism 2013-2015 (Tourism of Portugal, 2012). According to data from Statistics Portugal (INE, 2013a), tourism revenues in the country increased by 7.2 per cent in 2012 when compared with previous year. As described in Table 6.3., the total contribution of tourism to GDP was, 15.2 per cent in 2011 with €26.2 billion in total. It is forecast to fall by 2.1 per cent in 2012 and is expected to have risen by 1.8 per cent by 2022. In 2011, tourism generated 322,000 jobs directly, 6.6 per cent of total employment, and this is forecast

to fall by 0.3 per cent in 2012 to 321,000 (6.7 per cent of total employment). Despite the importance of tourism to GDP and employment, the World Travel and Tourism Council's (WTTC, 2012) forecast (covering 2012-2022) shows a negative growth for the year 2012 and a lower growth of tourism by 2022.

Table 6.3. The economic impact of tourism in Portugal.

	2011 % of total	2012 Growth (1)**	2022 % of total**	2020 Growth (2)**
Direct contribution to GDP	5.3	-2.2	5.4	1.7
Total contribution to GDP	15.2	-2.1	15.7	1.8
Direct contribution to employment	6.6	-0.3	7.0	1.2
Total contribution to employment	17.8	-0.3	18.9	1.2
Visitor exports*	17.3	0.6	15.1	1.6
Domestic exports	3.8	-6.5	3.8	1.9
Leisure exports	8.7	-1.8	8.9	1.7
Business exports	1.3	-5.2	1.2	1.8
Capital Investment	11.5	2.7	12.4	3.4

***Visitor exports -** spending within the country by international tourists/foreign visitors for both business and leisure trips, including spending on transport - (% of total exports); **forecast (1)** 2012 real growth adjusted for inflation (%); **(2)** 2012-2022 annualized real growth adjusted for inflation (%). *Source:* own elaboration based on WTTC (2012).

An analysis of Table 6.3. underlines the direct contribution of tourism to GDP in 2011, which was €9.2 billion (5.3 per cent of the total GDP). This is forecast to fall by 2.2 per cent in 2012 and to register a 1.7 per cent growth by 2022. This primarily reflects the economic activity generated by hotels, travel agents, airlines and passenger transportation services. Nevertheless, it also includes, for example, the activities of restaurants and leisure industries directly supported by tourist activity. The total contribution to employment (including wider effects from investment, the supply chain and induced income impacts) was 866,500 jobs in 2011 (17.8 per cent of total employment). This is forecast to fall by 0.3 per cent in 2012 and increase by 1.2 per cent by 2022 (18.9 per cent of total employment) according to the World Travel and Tourism Council (2012).

The Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Report 2013 reveals the Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index-TTCI (World Economic Forum, 2013) and states that Portugal is the 20th most competitive country/economy in the world in terms of - tourism - among 140 economies assessed. Countries such as Switzerland, Germany and Austria occupied the first three positions.

According to the same report, Portugal received close to 8 million international tourist arrivals in 2012 nearly US $11 million as international tourism receipts. Since 1997 international tourist arrivals and international tourism receipts have progressively increased (UNWTO, 2014), showing the tourism potential in the country and its regions.

According to the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO, 2014), despite economic and financial imbalances in most of the world's economies, international tourist arrivals grew by 5 per cent in 2013, reaching a record 1087 million arrivals worldwide, up from 1035 million in 2012. France continues to top the ranking for international tourist arrivals, with 83 million visitors in 2012, and is third in international tourism receipts US $56 billion in 2013). The United States ranks first in receipts with US $139.6 billion and second in arrivals with 69.8 million (see year 2013 - Table 6.4.). Europe led the growth in absolute terms, welcoming 29 million more international tourists in 2013, and raising the total to 563 million (UNWTO, 2014).

Table 6.4. World's top tourism destinations in arrivals and receipts (2012-2013).

International Tourists Arrivals					
Rank	Country	Million		Change (%)	
		2012	2013	12/11	13/12
1	France	83.0	…	1.8	…
2	US	66.7	69.8	6.3	4.7
3	Spain	57.5	60.7	2.3	5.6
4	China	57.7	55.7	0.3	-3.5
5	Italy	46.4	47.7	0.5	2.9
6	Turkey	35.7	37.8	3.0	5.9
7	Germany	30.4	31.5	7.3	3.7
8	UK	29.3	31.2	-0.1	6.4
9	Russia	25.7	28.4	13.5	10.2
10	Thailand	22.4	26.5	16.2	18.8

International Tourism Receipts						
		US$				Local Currencies
		Billion		Change (%)		Change (%)
Rank	Country	2012	2013	12/11	13/12	12/11	13/12
1	France	126.2	139.6	9.2	10.6	9.2	10.6
2	US	56.3	60.4	-6.3	7.4	1.5	3.9
3	Spain	53.6	56.1	-2.2	4.8	6.0	1.3
4	China	50.0	51.7	3.2	3.3	0.8	1.4
5	Italy	43.7	51.6	13.7	18.1	13.2	18.1
6	Turkey	41.2	43.9	-4.2	6.6	3.8	3.1
7	Germany	33.8	42.1	24.4	24.4	26.7	23.1
8	UK	38.1	41.2	-1.9	8.1	6.3	4.5
9	Russia	36.2	40.6	3.3	12.1	4.8	13.2
10	Thailand	33.1	38.9	16.2	17.7	15.8	17.7

Source: own elaboration based on UNWTO Tourism Highlights (2014).

Growth in absolute terms was led by Southern and Mediterranean Europe, which reported 11 million more international arrivals (6 per cent more) in 2013. The sub-region's largest destination Spain recorded a sound 6 per cent increase in arrivals to 61 million. Other major destinations such as Greece (16 per cent more) - Portugal (8 per cent more) - Turkey (6 per cent more) and Croatia (6 per cent more) also saw a robust growth in 2013 (UNWTO, 2014).

The World Travel and Tourism Council have recently released - The Economic Impact of Travel and Tourism 2015 for Portugal (see WTTC, 2015). This document provides up-to-date information on the economic impact of tourism in Portugal, thus complementing Table 6.3. The direct contribution of travel and tourism to GDP was €10.4 billion (6.0 per cent of total GDP) in 2014, and is forecast to rise by 3.1 per cent in 2015, and to rise by 2.5 per cent (per annum), between 2015 and 2025, and is expected to reach €13.7 billion (6.9 per cent of total GDP) in 2025. Some other relevant information is further provided:

- The total contribution of travel and tourism to GDP, which includes the indirect and induced impacts of travel and tourism on the economy, was €27.3 billion (15.7 per cent of GDP) in 2014, and is forecast to rise by 2.2 per cent in 2015, and to rise by 1.9 per cent (per annum) to €33.6 billion (17.0 per cent of GDP) in 2025;

- The total contribution of travel and tourism to employment, including jobs indirectly supported by the industry, was 18.4 per cent of total employment (831,500 jobs) in 2014. This is expected to rise by 3.2 per cent in 2015 to 858,000 jobs and rise by 1.1 per cent (per annum) to 960,000 jobs in 2025 (20.9 per cent of total);

- Visitor exports generated €13.4 billion (19.7 per cent of total exports) in 2014. This is forecast to grow by 2.2 per cent in 2015, and grow by 2.8 per cent (per annum), from 2015-2025, to €18.0 billion in 2025 (22.7 per cent of total). Money spent by foreign visitors to a country (or visitor exports) is a key component of the direct contribution of Travel and Tourism. In 2014, Portugal generated 13.4 billion in visitor exports. In 2015, the visitor exports and investment is expected to grow by 2.2 per cent, and the country is expected to attract around 9 million international tourist in 2015 (see WTTC, 2015).

When compared to the performance of other countries in terms of total contribution to GDP and to employment in 2014, Portugal holds the 30th position in terms of contribution to GDP - US $36.4 billion (below World and European average) and holds the position number 41st when comes to employment (above European average) (see Table 6.5.).

Unfortunately I could not access data from other sectors of activity (or for the other strategic domains identified in chapter 5), in terms of employment and contribution to GDP at the national and regional levels, to establish here a comparison with tourism. This comparison would reveal the real importance of this strategic domain to the socio-spatial and spatial-economic condition of the region of northern Portugal.

Table 6.5. Travel and tourism contribution to GDP and employment in Portugal and other countries.

Travel and tourism total contribution to GDP			Travel and tourism total contribution to employment		
World ranking position	Country name	2014 (US$ billion)	World ranking position	Country name	2014 '000 jobs
5	UK	309.8	11	UK	4228.0
6	France	254.8	16	France	2714.1
7	Italy	216.7	17	Spain	2652.6
8	Spain	214.4	18	Italy	2553.0
14	Turkey	95.8	22	Turkey	2130.2
World average		58.3	World average		2076.6
Europe average		45.4	25	Morocco	1740.7
29	Greece	39.1	41	Portugal	831.6
30	Portugal	36.4	Europe average		749.2
49	Morocco	19.1	47	Greece	699.9
86	Cyprus	4.5	127	Cyprus	82.4
103	Malta	2.9	144	Malta	51.1

Source. Own elaboration based on WTTC (2015).

In terms of visitor exports – which reflects the spending within the country by international tourists/foreign visitors for both business and leisure trips, including spending on transport, but excluding international spending on education, Portugal occupies the position 24th, with US $17.8 billion, above both, Europe and World averages, US $12.1 billion and US $7.5 billion respectively (Figure 6.2. - the highlighted black bar has been used only to emphasise Portugal and highlight two cases for comparison, in this case the world average and the neighbour country of Spain).

Figure 6.2. Money spent (in US $) by foreign visitors to a country (or visitor exports).
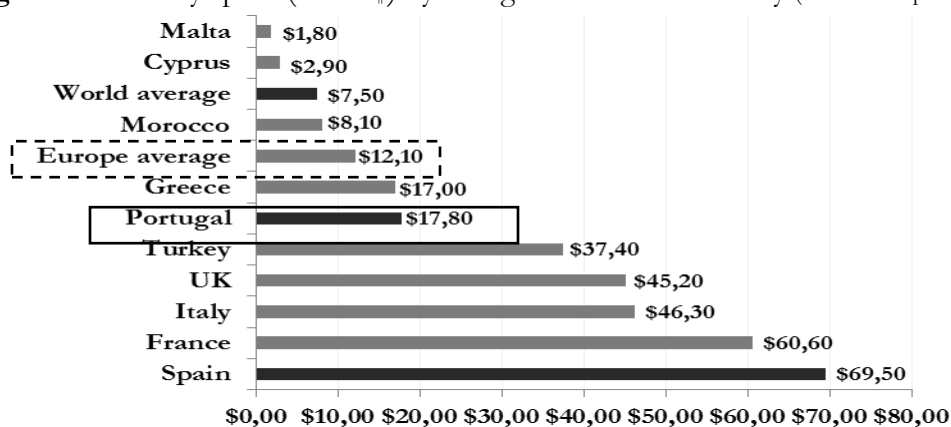
Source: own elaboration based on WTTC (2015).

Again, and despite several attempts, I could not access the same indicators for northern Portugal. The next section assembles and critically analyse other relevant data for the region.

6.5. The tourism potential of northern Portugal

Northern Portugal is often associated with the "green" of its natural scenery, characterized by the biogeography of the Peneda-Gerês National Park, mountainous terrain, that provides tourism opportunities (for example for rural tourism). The traditional rural way of life, the ethnography (for example handicraft, folklore, and religious celebrations) and its gastronomy (and wines) contribute to the region's uniqueness and attractiveness (Kastenholz, 2002). Four United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization World Heritage Sites (henceforth UNESCO) are also part of the region's cultural assets:

(1) Alto Douro Wine Region (Douro river);
(2) Historic Centre of Guimarães (Guimarães city);
(3) Historic Centre of Oporto (Porto city), and
(4) Pre-historic Rock Art Sites in the Côa valley (Côa river, which is a tributary of the Douro river).

The abovementioned UNESCO sites are not inevitably part of the tourism potential of northern Portugal. I will clarify my argument here. The UNESCO's list has been created with the objective of preservation, conservation and secure future and not necessarily development. Therefore, I acknowledged that the use of these sites for tourism proposes is often limited. An example might be useful here. The Pre-historic Rock Art Sites in the Côa valley is now completely controlled so that only a handful of visitors can actually have access to it, despite that is part of the regional assets and, following the results of the interviews conducted for the purpose of this study (see chapter 5 and below), has been communicated as part of regional tourism potential.

According to the Institute of Tourism Planning and Development (ITPD 2011; 2014) the top six tourist markets in the 4th quarter of 2011 were:
(1) Spain (25.8 per cent);
(2) France (18.3 per cent);
(3) United Kingdom (15.1 per cent);
(4) Italy (9.3 per cent);
(5) The Netherlands (8.7 per cent), and
(6) Germany (6.0 per cent).

The top six tourist markets in the 1st quarter of 2014 were:
(1) France (34.8 per cent);
(2) Spain (15.6 per cent);
(3) Switzerland (14.3 per cent);
(4) United Kingdom (11.1 per cent);
(5) Germany (9.0 per cent);
(6) The Netherlands (4.1 per cent).

Visitors, with residence in one of aforementioned countries, chose to visit the city of Porto and the northern region of Portugal for different reasons (this information has been collected by ITPD at Oporto Airport, Porto, northern Portugal). According to ITPD (2011; 2014), in the 4th quarter of 2011 Spanish visitors visited the region for "business" reasons (32.6 per cent) while French visitors visited the region in the same quarter of 2011 for "leisure" reasons (18.9 per cent). In the 1st quarter of 2014, individuals with residence in France visited Porto and northern Portugal to "visit family and friends", while individuals with residence in Spain visited the region for "business" purposes the same purpose of Dutch visitors (see Table 6.6.):

Table 6.6. General reasons to visit Porto and northern Portugal (values in %) by country of residence (source markets) in 4th quarter of 2011 and 1st quarter of 2014.

2011 (4th quarter)				2014 (1st quarter)				
Country of residence*	Leisure	Business	Overall	Country of residence*	Leisure/ vacations	Visit family/ friends	Business	Overall
Spain	**21.8**	**32.6**	**25.8**	**France**	**29.4**	**45.6**	**27.7**	**34.8**
France	**18.9**	**17.1**	**18.3**	**Spain**	**17.2**	**10.1**	**20.2**	**15.6**
UK	**16.1**	13.4	15.1	Switzerland	14.1	**18.1**	9.6	14.3
Italy	7.6	**12.3**	9.3	Germany	**14.1**	5.4	13.8	11.1
Netherlands	**9.8**	7.0	8.7	Netherlands	3.7	2.0	**7.4**	4.1
Germany	4.1	9.1	6.0	Brazil	4.3	2.0	3.2	2.9
Brazil	4.7	0.5	3.2	Italy	3.7	0.7	3.2	2.7
Switzerland	4.1	0.0	2.6	Belgium	1.8	3.4	2.1	2.3
Luxemburg	2.5	0.0	1.6	Luxemburg	0.6	3.4	-	1.4
Belgium	0.6	3.2	1.6	Angola	-	2.0	3.2	1.4
Poland	1.3	1.1	1.2	US	0.6	-	1.1	0.5
Others	8.5	3.7	6.7					
Total	100%	100%	100%	Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source: own elaboration based on ITPD (2011; 2014). * Is important to underline here that ITPD does not separate, from the group tourists/visitors, foreign nationals from Portuguese citizens (migrant people) that, for example, return to Portugal to visit family and friends. Of course this methodology does not allow drawing a clear picture of the nationality of the foreign individuals that visit northern Portugal (source markets).

Table 6.6. also informs the reader that in 2011 the main visitors were from Spain and in the 1st quarter of 2014 they were from France. From the total of visitors from France, 45.6 per cent visit the country to "visit family or friends" and 27.7 per cent visited northern Portugal for "business" reasons, followed by "leisure/vacations" purposes (29.4 per cent). Despite the fact that would have been very insightful to identify if different nationalities visit Portugal to do different activities, this

was not possible to identity and debate. Another critique that arises is related to the effectiveness of the data supplied by ITPD regarding the source markets. Analysing the general reasons to visit Porto and northern Portugal by country of residence (source markets), is not possible to clarify if tourists are nationals of the country of residence or not (that means that the values also include Portuguese citizens living and working abroad and return to the region for a visit).

In the 1st quarter of 2014, and according to ITPD (2014) tourists who visited Porto and northern Portugal did so due to "vacation", followed by "visiting relatives/friends" and "business" reasons. Those who came on "vacation", they travelled to the region mainly to "rest/relax", to "visit the region" or to make a "short-break". Tourists on business, they visited Porto and northern Portugal for "business meetings" / "work or sales" / other services (see Figure 6.3., 6.4., 6.5.).

Figure 6.3. General reasons to visit Porto and northern Portugal in 1st quarter of 2014.
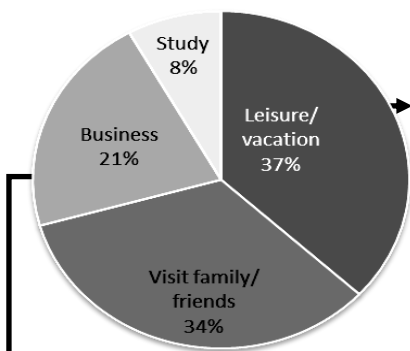
Figure 6.4. Specific motives to visit Porto and northern Portugal in 1st quarter of 2014 of those that visit for "leisure" reasons.
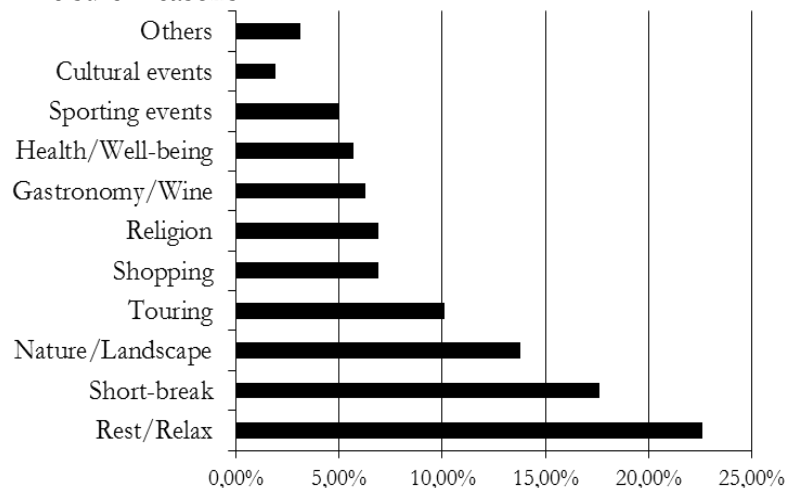
Figure 6.5. Specific motives to visit Porto and northern Portugal in 1st quarter of 2014 of those that visit for "business" reasons.
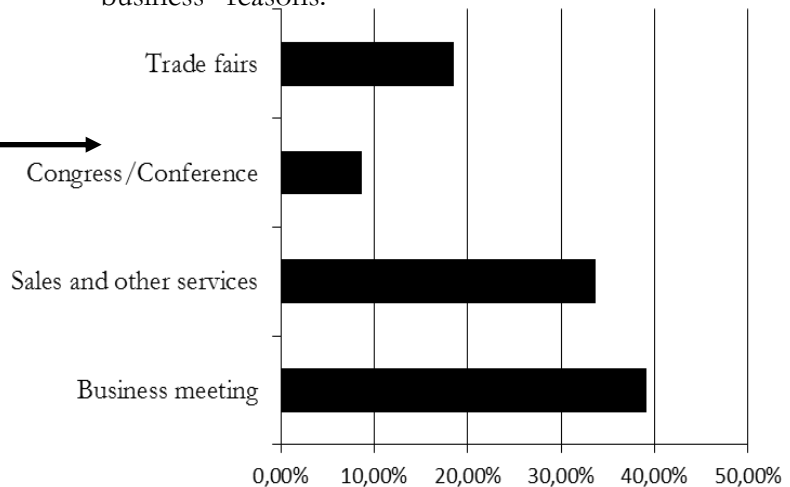
Source: own elaboration based on ITPD (2014).

In the 1st quarter of 2014, the three main specific motives to visit Porto and northern Portugal were:

(1) Experimenting regional gastronomy (an overall of 62.8 per cent);
(2) Shopping (an overall of 60.2 per cent);
(3) Enjoying the landscape (an overall of 50.3 per cent);
(4) Touring around the region (an overall of 35.5 per cent), and
(5) Night life (an overall of 34.4 per cent).

This is similar to the tourists' behaviour in the 4th quarter of 2011. However, the list of motives is so extensive which reveals the diversity of northern Portugal as whole (Table 6.7.).

Table 6.7. Specific motives to visit Porto and northern Portugal in 1st quarter of 2014.

Motives	Of those that visit the region for the following reasons (values in %)			
	leisure/vacation	visit family/friends	business	Overall
Experiment gastronomy	47.4	66.4	90.7	62.8
Shopping	67.5	68.9	37.0	60.2
Landscape	55.2	42.5	53.7	50.3
Touring around the region	35.1	50.8	9.3	35.5
Night life	26.6	46.7	25.9	34.4
Douro Valley	31.8	31.1	9.3	26.7
Built heritage	31.8	25.4	3.7	23.3
Shopping handicraft	21.4	23.0	9.3	18.8
Visiting Douro river in cruise ships	23.4	20.5	1.9	17.6
Visit Casa da Musica (House of Music)	23.4	14.8	1.9	15.6
Visit beaches	15.6	19.7	7.4	15.5
Attending cultural events	15.6	15.6	1.9	12.5
Visit Serralves	15.6	14.8	1.9	12.5
Pre-planned touring by BUS	15.6	14.8	1.9	12.2
Visit museums	15.6	12.3	-	11.4

Visit Port Wine cellars	13.6	13.7	1.9	10.8
Participate of sporting events	8.4	13.8	-	8.5
Visit Côa valley	8.4	11.5	1.9	8.2
Participate of cultural events	8.4	10.7	1.9	7.7
Playing Golf	6.5	12.3	-	7.4
Visit the city of Guimarães	5.8	11.5	1.9	6.8
Participate of sportive events	5.2	11.5	-	6.2

Source: own elaboration based on ITPD (2014).

In the 1st quarter of 2014, the average stay of tourists who chose Porto and northern Portugal for "leisure/vacation" and those who chose the region for "visiting family/friends" were generally higher than in the same quarter of 2013. For "business" tourists the number of nights spent in Porto and northern Portugal were similar to those obtained in the 1st quarter of 2013 (ITPD, 2014). For example, tourists in "leisure/vacation" spent 6,43 nights in the region in the 1ˢᵗ quarter of 2014, while tourists in business spent in the same quarter 2,89 nights.

Figure 6.6. Average of nights spent by tourists in Porto and northern Portugal (1st quarter 2014).
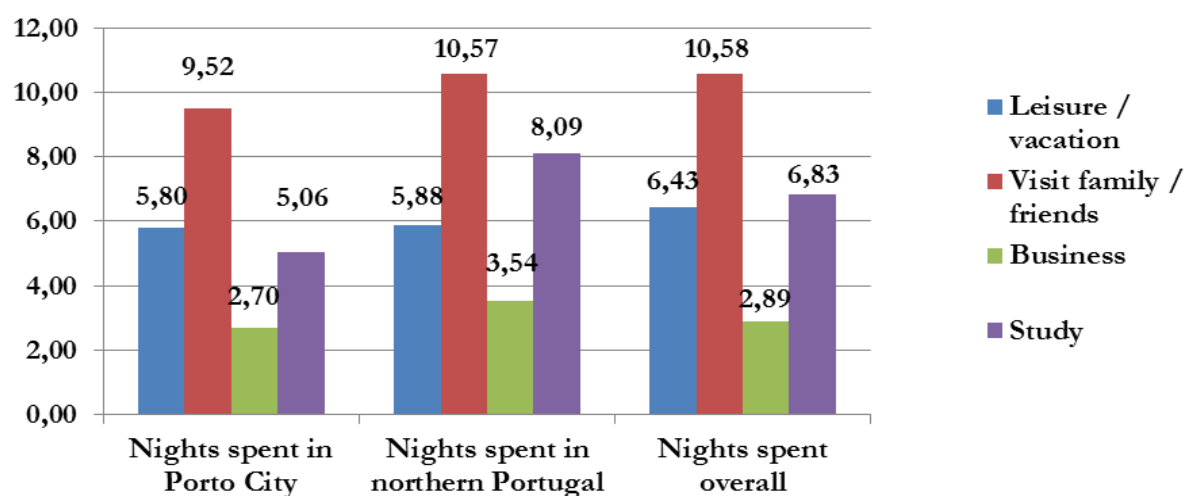
Source: own elaboration based on ITPD (2014).

Analysing where the tourists spent the night while visiting Porto and northern Portugal, the ITPD (2014) study attempts to conclude a mixed performance (Figure 6.6.). The nights spent in the region in the 1st quarter of 2014 was 10,58 nights; higher when compared to the same quarter of 2012 (11,29 nights). Also in the 1st quarter of 2014 those tourists who have spent nights outside Porto city chose to do it in (1) Braga, (2) Póvoa do Varzim, (3) Guimarães, (4) Régua, and (5) Viana do Castelo. When compared with previous quarter, the value worth to be highlighted is that the number of nights spent in Braga that decreased from 43.2 per cent (1st quarter of 2013) to 19.7 per cent (1st quarter of 2014) (see Figure 6.7.).

Figure 6.7. Overnight stay cities of northern Portugal, for those tourists who have decided to spend some nights out of Porto (data for the 1st quarter of 2014).
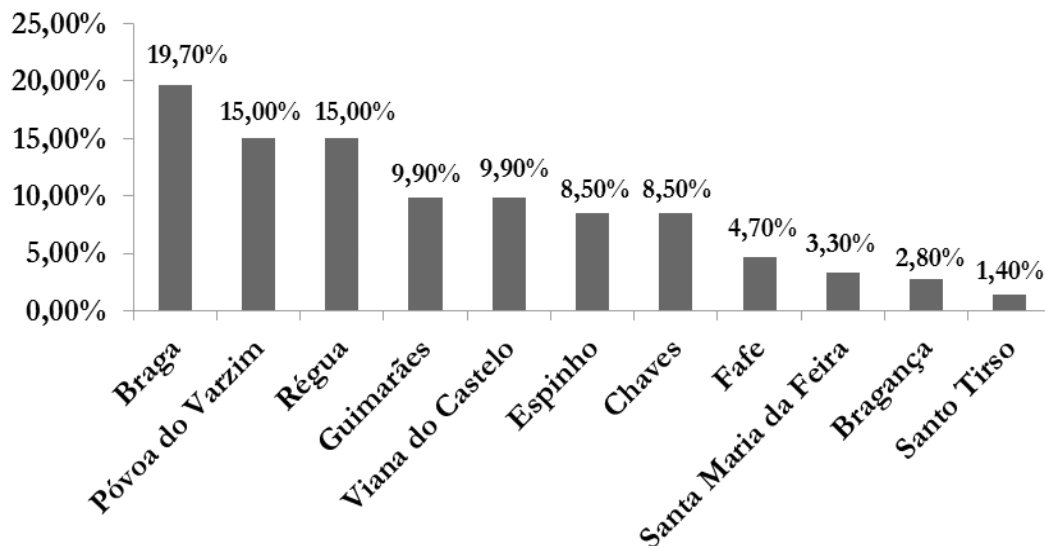
Source: own elaboration based on ITPD (2014).

According to the May 2015 edition of the Tourism Barometer produced and published by the Institute of Tourism Planning and Development (ITPD, 2015) the tourism product – "sun and sea" is the tourism product with higher impact in Portugal in summer 2015, followed by "city breaks", "gastronomy and wines" (see Figure 6.8. for full list of products).

Figure 6.8. Key tourism products for Portugal and its regions in the summer of 2015.

Cruise ships — 1,10%
Health and Wellbeing — 1,20%
Nautic Tourism — 1,20%
Golf — 2,40%
Resorts — 4,10%
Business Turism — 4,10%
Ecotourism — 4,70%
Cultural and Landscape Touring — 10,00%
Gastronomy and Wine — 11,80%
City Breaks — 28,80%
Sun and Sea — 30,60%
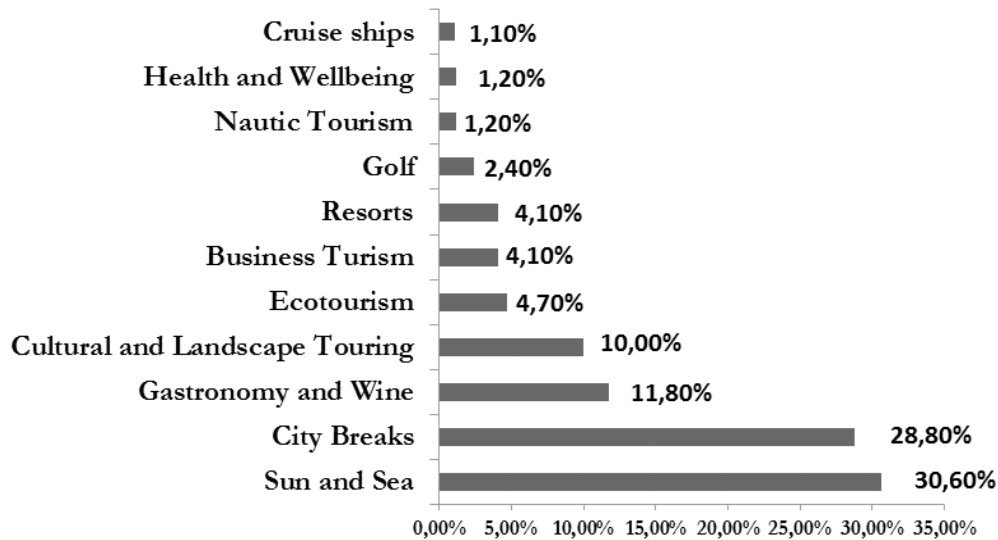
Source: own elaboration based on ITPD (2015).

Tourism also encompasses the opportunity to discover the growing number of certified products with a designation of origin (for example wines, cheese, and olive oil). In addition to wine, olive oil, smoked meats, honey and other agro-food products, as well as bobbin lace and filigree work, many other handicraft goods of extensive quality and authenticity have also achieved such recognition of origin. The built environment, the heritage and the cultural value associated with these products have additionally led to the creation of specific promotional instruments, such as the Olive Oil Route (Terras de Trás-os-Montes), the wines routes "Vinhos Verdes" and the Port Wine Route (CCDRN, 2013).

The Tourism Barometer (ITPD, 2015) also summarises the measures to boost tourism in Portugal and its regions (see Figure 6.9.). Nearly 30.0 per cent of respondents' points to internal and external promotion as the primary measure needed to boost tourism. The need to increase and diversify the air routes from and to Portuguese main airports has also been identified as priority. Only 2.2 per cent of the respondents have identified the need to invest in – "Brand Portugal" as essential to boost the tourism sector at the country and regional levels, while others respondents have identified the need to invest in internal/external tourism promotion (27.7 per cent). Therefore, one can conclude that isolated or "hit and run" place promotional campaigns receive more attention (and importance) than a place brand, for the case nation brand (Brand Portugal).

Figure 6.9. Measures to boost tourism in Portugal and in its regions.

Source: own elaboration based on ITPD (2015).

The Tourism Barometer (ITPD, 2015) is a useful instrument to understand the potential of tourism for Portugal and its regions. However, some of the indicators miss justification and are difficult to frame (even difficult to analyse and debate), such as the meaning of "awareness campaigns" or "improve Brand Portugal". In line with the same source (ITPD, 2015) the key foreign markets to promote the tourism potential of Portugal are: (1) France, (2) Germany, (3) UK, (4) Spain and (5) Brazil. A possible justification for this could be because these countries are existing markets. The next sections will help to clarify the key elements of the two main strategic documents for the tourism sector at the national and regional levels.

6.6. Research methodology employed in this chapter
In line with the research methodology of this thesis, this chapter employs a qualitative methodology, through content analysis and in-depth interviewing. Following the application of qualitative methods involving content analysis in tourist destination studies (Govers and Go, 2004; Tasci and Kozak, 2006; Govers *et al.*, 2007) and bearing in mind the complexity of branding places, a critical content analysis of the two main policy documents for tourism in Portugal and in the northern part of the country has been carried out.

6.6.1. Content analysis of policy documents for tourism at national and regional levels
In line with chapters 3 and 4 as well as the work of Krippendorff (2003) and Oliveira (2013b; 2013c) this chapter has employed a content analysis on two policy documents in terms of their approach

towards the tourism potential of Northern Portugal: National Strategic Plan for Tourism 2013-2015 (section 6.6.1.1.) and Northern Portugal Strategic Guidelines 2014-2020 (section 6.6.1.2.).

6.6.1.1. National Strategic Plan for Tourism 2013-2015

The National Strategic Plan for Tourism 2013-2015 (Plano Estratégico Nacional do Turismo Horizonte 2013-2015, in Portuguese), published by Tourism of Portugal (2012), underlines the need to develop tourist activity based on the national assets (whether tangible or intangible). The document highlights tourism as an engine of social, economic and environmental development at national and regional levels, with a special potential relying in the regions of the country such as the northern part (Tourism of Portugal, 2012, p. 7). The weak economic confidence is acknowledged in the document and measures for improvement are presented. Mechanisms are identified to finance entrepreneurial projects related to tourist activity as a means to overcome economic imbalances. Six tourist products for northern Portugal are identified (without any order of importance) and measures to boost them are also clarified (Tourism of Portugal, 2012, p. 28):

- **Cultural and religious-oriented tourism** by connecting a multiplicity of sites of interest. For that to happen the need to provide better information is identified as well as the need to diversify the offer of tourist experiences;

- **Health tourism** (wellbeing, medical and thermal) by creating specialised services as well as improve the coordination between medical service and tourism;

- **Business tourism** which needs better infrastructures and supportive services to make it an effective tourist product. In addition, the national and regional tourism authorities seem to have forgotten that to have business tourism is necessary to have business – so the business climate generates value to tourism and not the other way around;

- **Ecotourism** by developing facilities and improving infrastructures, in particular to consolidate rural tourism. Improve the information and diversify communication channels is also identified as a key priority;

- **Gastronomy and wine tourism** by developing and implementing thematic circuits, develop content and experiences, particularly related with Douro and Port Wine. One of the flagship wines from northern Portugal – sparkly white wine ("Vinho Verde") is not mentioned on the document. This absence can be explained as "Vinho Verde" has a less favourable reputation among non-Portuguese people as it is a too sharp and young wine;

- **Nautical tourism (sailing and surfing)** has been identified as having a great potential in northern Portugal. However, it needs better communication strategies to position it as tourist product, both internally and externally. In addition, it needs appropriate local conditions as well as infrastructures. I have witnessed some improvements but I also see them as isolated cases without a clear strategy or aligned with branding efforts at the regional level neither they are integrated in strategic spatial planning at the national and regional levels.

The list of products presented above, however, is so general, vague and an "all-inclusive list of tourism products" that one can argue that is difficult to clearly and effectively identify the tourism potential of northern Portugal (despite that the key regional actors interviewed have underlined tourism as a key regional strategic domain). Although the National Strategic Plan for Tourism 2013-2015 states that tourism is a strategic domain to rebalance the Portuguese economy and contribute to regional development and cohesion, the document has some incongruities. For instance, it superficially emphasizes the regional tourism potential of northern Portugal and other regions. Moreover, the tourism potential of the main northern cities such as Porto, Braga, Guimarães, Viana do Castelo, Vila Real, Bragança, among others, including their natural landscapes, built environment, traditions, gastronomy and heritage are not integrated. There are references to the need to value public spaces and rationally use natural resources, as well as preserve heritage (Tourism of Portugal, 2012, p. 38). Despite that the National Strategic Plan for Tourism 2013-2015 highlights the need to align the national policies and strategies with the priorities for the tourism sector at the national and regional levels as well as better vertical coordination, which implies the decentralization of competencies, engagement with regional actors, there is, however, an evident disconnection between national policies and strategic spatial planning documents and the tourism strategy for the country (see chapter 3 of this thesis for a deeper analysis).

It is also evident from the analysis of the content of the National Strategic Plan for Tourism 2013-2015 a misunderstanding between what place branding is and what a slogan or tagline is as often the word branding is used interchangeably. According to Ashworth and Kavaratzis (2010) a slogan is interpreted as a brand which is an incorrect conceptualization. For example, regarding the tourist product "gastronomy and wines", a slogan - Taste Portugal (Prove Portugal) - is mentioned as a "brand" to be promoted (Tourism of Portugal, 2012, p. 21 and p. 57). The existence of the "brand"- Destination Portugal (Destino Portugal) - does not prevent the existence of other potential regional brands or brands for specific target markets, such as gastronomy or wines. However, Portugal and its regions will benefit more from an effective and strategic integration of a wider branding strategy and strategic spatial planning, thus making effective and responsible use of resources (natural and financial). However, it is not clear how the current strategic plan for tourism fits with strategic spatial planning documents such as Northern Portugal Strategic Guidelines/Operational Programme 2014-2020 a matter to be discussed further below.

6.6.1.2. Northern Portugal Strategic Guidelines/ Operational Programme 2014-2020

The Northern Portugal Strategic Guidelines 2014-2020 (Diagnóstico Prospetivo da Região do Norte 2014-2020, in Portuguese), published by CCDRN (2014d), is an invited investigation report that is requested from the Portuguese government from CCDRN. The aim of the document is to prepare a concise and prospective economic and social diagnosis of Northern Portugal for the period of 2014-2020, following the agreement between Portugal and the European Commission, and the respective EU Operational Programmes. The Northern Portugal Strategic Guidelines 2014-2020 intend to establish the public policies, and priorities for public and private investment co-financed by the EU (page 5 of the document).

The document follows the EU Strategy 2020 (European Union, 2010). The EU Strategy 2020 is about delivering: smart growth, through more effective investments in education, research and innovation; sustainable growth, thanks to a decisive move towards a low-carbon economy; and inclusive growth, with a strong emphasis on job creation and poverty alleviation. The Northern Portugal Strategic Guidelines 2014-2020 acknowledged the current structural macroeconomic issues. The document also underlines the potential for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth.

Tourism is identified as an activity with high potential for growth, economic restructuring and job creation (page 16 of the document). Tourism is also associated with other activities such as sea economy and health tourism, both strategic domains. A sustainable approach to territorial assets is fundamental to the whole tourism value chain (page 37 of the document).

References to place branding are missing, both for the city or regional level, as extensively argued in chapter 3. There are references to the advantage of promoting competitiveness using technological expertise developed within regional borders. The failure in the attempt to retain visitors and a need to build a regional promotional strategy is identified (page 58 of the document). The document underlines "promotion" instead of "branding" (reinforcing the key findings debated in chapter 3). Thus, it currently lacks long-term actions to re-position, re-imagine and to instigate the reputation of the northern part of Portugal. There are references to the need to develop cooperative ties but the document lacks ideas on how to operationalize this possible cooperation. It is also unclear what kind of cooperation, if sectoral or territorial with other Portuguese regions or across the border with Galicia, for instance.

In order to better understand some of these incongruences and in line with Yuksel *et al.*, (1999), who underline in their work on the tourism potential of Pamukkale in Turkey, that place actors must be involved in the decision-making processes concerning tourism development. And without their participation, sometimes, disputes can arise; two interviews were conducted with two regional actors, respectively: (1) Regional Entity of Tourism of Porto and Northern Portugal (TPNP) and (2) North Regional Coordination and Development Commission (CCDRN).

6.6.2. Analysing interviews with key regional actors

Two in-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted with two key regional stakeholders to retrieve core information and their perspectives regarding the tourism potential of Northern Portugal (TPNP and CCDRN). Both interviews were conducted by the author of this chapter at the headquarters of each institution in March 2014. The locations were; Viana do Castelo, for TPNP and Porto, for CCDRN. In both cases the respondents were professionals from each entity and responsible for planning and operations. The respondents were indicated by the presidency of each institution as being able to represent their interests and perspectives for Northern Portugal. Acknowledging the limitation of the sample, the author takes their participation as an institutional response to the posed questions.

The interview at CCDRN was conducted with the manager of the department of regional development. By using digital recording hardware, following a semi-structured interview guide (see appendix B, page 239), each conversation lasted one hour. The interview at TPNP was conducted

with the manager of the department of tourism planning and promotion. Both were indicated by their respective directorates.

Tourism of Porto and Northern Portugal was created to ensure the sustainable development of regional tourism potential. This entity is in charge of enhancing tourism as a strategic sector of the economy of Porto city and the northern region as a whole. The aims of this entity are to define, monitor and assess policies and strategic business plans, as well as to provide relevant information to support public and private decisions, in order to promote the full range of activities in the tourism sector at the regional level.

The North Regional Coordination and Development Commission is a decentralized body of the central government. Its mission is to promote the conditions permitting the integrated and sustainable development of Northern Portugal, thereby contributing to territorial cohesion at the national level. CCDRN, a body which has administrative and financial autonomy, is tasked with coordinating and promoting, in the Portuguese North Region, governmental policies with regard to regional planning and development, environment, land-use management, and inter-regional and cross-border cooperation. The body's fields of intervention also encompass the management of regional operational programmes financed by EU funds supplied to provide support to Portugal, as well as other regional development finance instruments to accomplish strategic harmonization at the regional level in a very specific manner.

Instead of individualizing the different opinions/perspectives on the tourism potential of northern Portugal, this study presents a summary of the key points that were raised. In parallel with structural reforms to return to fiscal sustainability, measures to tackle excessive spending growth and better financial management tools, a place branding strategy able to enhance, in an integrative way, the tourism potential of the country and the northern region, could be effective and generate regional dynamics, and tackle regional unemployment, the respondents have emphasized. The respondents have underlined that tourism is a strategic domain for Portugal and the northern region and a branding strategy at the regional level could make sense but only if preceded by a wider territorial intervention and the definition of a consistent strategy. The need to give clarity to the long-term vision for Portugal has also been asserted. So far this has stayed close to the European Union agenda for 2020. Portugal strictly follows the EU's recommendations and strategic line. Both the TPNP respondent and the representative of the CCDRN agree that the European competitive agenda and the EU guidelines are fundamental to financing any step towards a regional branding strategy but should give freedom to explore uniqueness and inner strategic domains. Following their statement, the discussion went to the level of a potential regional branding strategy.

The opinions have underlined that the development of the regional tourism potential, better communication and an effective strategy could attract more investment. The need to facilitate the licensing of infra-structures, tourist activities and tourist accommodations, for example, has been underlined. Both respondents have agreed that participatory planning and communication tools are essential to spreading a positive message of northern Portugal to the outside world. Furthermore, it is also important to engage with the community and stakeholders, not only from the tourism sector but other sectors of activity. Ensuring the well-being and pride of local communities is of core value when conducting a place branding initiative the respondents have emphasized. However, both

respondents have stated that there will be difficulties to design a regional branding strategy as the region is so heterogeneous. Bearing in mind both perspectives designing a regional branding strategy might be a tough task although possible and worth researching about it.

6.7. Conclusions

Bringing together the content of the two policy documents that were analysed for content and the perspectives of the two entities interviewed (TPNP and CCDRN) the results can be concluded that there are misalignments between entities, misconceptions, such as the definition of a place brand, and a nonexistence of a long-term vision for the tourism sector in the country. The economic and social context of Portugal reflects the lack of territorial organization and the definition of unique trajectories for place development and potential branding strategies. Although Portugal has started down a long road of economic adjustment to boost growth and correct an excessive reliance on debt, as stated in the document - Northern Portugal Strategic Guidelines 2014-2020 - a wide range of structural reforms is required to raise productivity and rebalance the economy. This is expected to positively impact the tourism activity in the coming years, as stated by the TPNP. As a policy recommendation it seems more likely to effectively impact the economy of the country as well as support job creation, if a tourism strategy further then 2020 could be designed.

In addition, the National Strategic Plan for Tourism 2013-2015, in line with the 2012 OECD report (OECD, 2012a), underlines that international trade and tourism are key sectors for rebalancing the Portuguese economy as a whole. An economic and social rebalance is paramount to designing a regional branding strategy, a statement that has been shared by the TPNP and CCDRN respondents. Furthermore, deeper knowledge is necessary about what is going on in Portugal, in terms of both strategies, and tactical interventions in the tourism sector. The respondents from Tourism of Porto and the North of Portugal and North Regional Coordination and Development Commission have emphasized that this is in order to support a resilient approach able to enhance national and regional competitiveness, and boost the economy. It has been clearly stated by the respondents that tourism plays a crucial role as a generator of jobs and revenues; therefore, it has been identified as a strategic domain able to integrate a wider regional branding strategy. However, how to operationalize it remains uncertain which open doors for future research.

Even though I acknowledge the value of the national plan for the development of the national and regional tourism sector, the time frame (2013-2015) is in my view a limitation to implementing a long-term strategy and an effective regional branding strategy. In addition, several questions emerge from the analysis of the National Strategic Plan for Tourism 2013-2015 (see Figure 6.10. for a graphical visualisation of some of the question). For example, what is the main distinction between the tourism brand of Portugal (Destination Portugal) and northern Portugal, as the document seldom refers to Portuguese regions? Does Destination Portugal works as an umbrella brand to support the communication of regional tourism potential as the current regional tourism brand - "Porto and the North – The Essence of Portugal"? What about cross-border cooperation between northern Portugal and the Spanish autonomous community of Galicia and possible cross-border branding synergies?

Figure 6.10. Summary of key questions that result of the above analysis on the branding attempts in Portugal and its northern region.
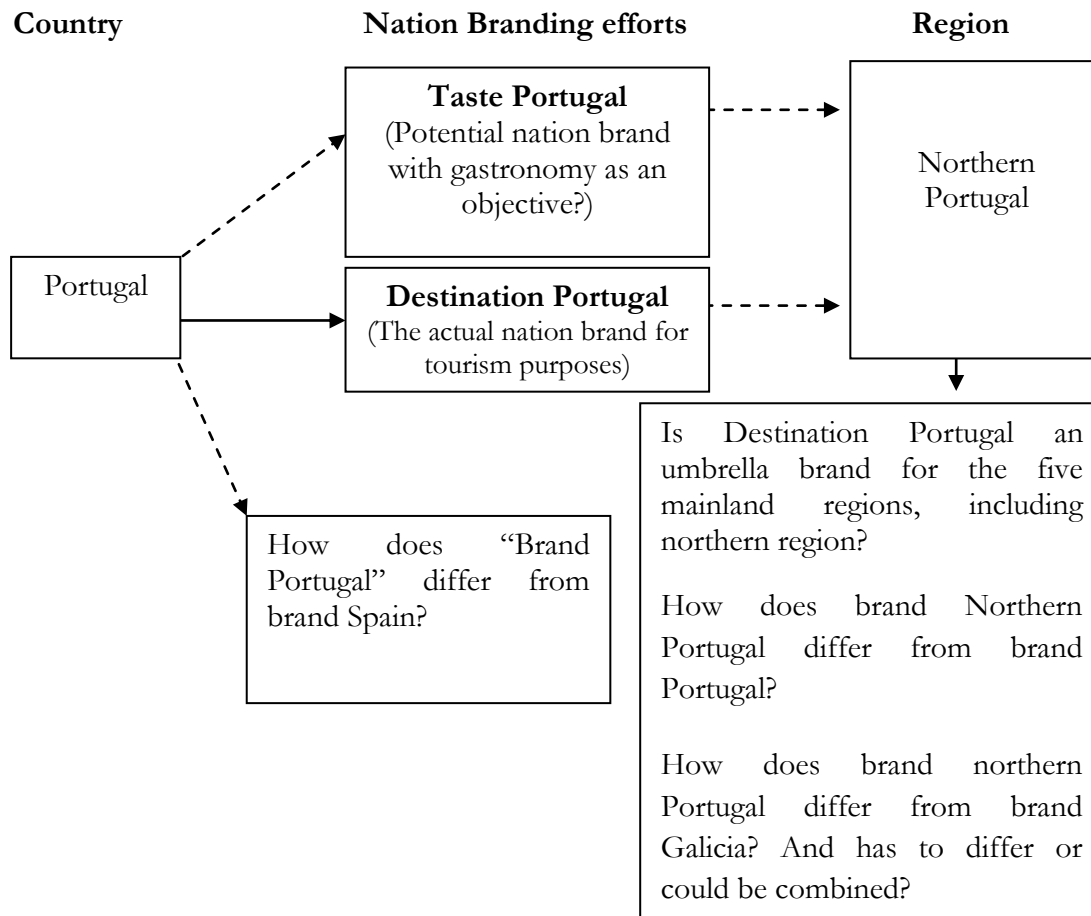
Neither the documents I have analysed in this chapter, nor the interviews I have conducted were useful to provide some answers to the aforementioned questions. From this scenario of doubt, it sounds reasonable to revise the National Strategic Plan for Tourism 2013-2015 and tightening it to the strategic spatial plans elaborated at the regional scale for the period 2014-2020. This revision would bring more consistency and harmonisation of the current branding efforts and would attempt to improve the social and economic conditions of Portugal and its regions.

With the abovementioned in mind, let us return to the research question stated in the introductory part of this chapter – "is tourism a strategic domain with the potential to support a regional branding strategy for northern Portugal?" Place branding in strategic spatial planning could attempt to develop regional synergies by structuring place identities and by highlighting place qualities assets and tourism potential (in line with the theoretical framework of this thesis). However, the need to re-organize the Portuguese territory, special at the regional level, remains a priority. This was emphasized by the respondents. This final remarks works here as a policy recommendation for

Portuguese authorities and it can be generalized and enhance the literature on regional branding. An appealing regional brand, supported by consistent image building and a strategic vision which are integrated in a wider territorial strategy, will allow the development of unique and distinct identities, and to establish a clear and competitive position in the tourism marketplace. The respondents have underlined that there is political will to enhance place competitiveness at the regional level; however, the strategic documents are not effective in that regard.

The second research question was – "is a regional branding strategy an engine by which to enable economic and social transformation in the region, thus responding to the contemporary challenges such as weak economic confidence and unemployment?" From the qualitative research conducted, the analysis of the two main documents and the two interviews, it seems there is a need for ways of thinking and for tools, concepts and instruments that help the central government and regional entities to cope better with challenges. The key findings from the content analysis and the opinions shared suggest that northern Portugal has the potential to explore tourism as a strategic activity to rebalance the regional economy and contribute to regional dynamics and territorial cohesion. A branding strategy able to highlight the tourism potential of northern Portugal could strengthen the position of the region and the country as a whole. As a policy recommendation, the development of a unique strategy for tourism at the national level able to integrate the regional qualities and unique tangible and intangible elements will benefit not only the tourism activity but also related sectors.

Both institutions (TPNP and CCDRN) have highlighted the cooperation between the region of northern Portugal and Galicia in northwest Spain far beyond tourism. Bearing in mind that Galicia and northern Portugal have enjoyed long periods of shared history, culture and identity roots the next chapter, by taking these two regions as an exploratory case study, directly addresses the need to develop place branding, independently of the geographical scale of application (in this case across administrative border regions) through a strategic spatial planning approach. Fulfilling, thus, the second part of the main research question of this thesis and clarify some misunderstanding that have resulted from the content analysis of the two policy documents above mentioned.

Chapter 7: Place branding in strategic spatial planning: cross-border cooperation in a regional branding strategy with reference to Northern Portugal and Galicia

Chapter overview

This chapter adopts a strategic spatial planning approach to think strategically about potential joint place-branding initiatives between cross-border regions. The case study focuses on the Euroregion composed of Galicia in northwest Spain and northern Portugal. Bearing in mind the mismatch of styles of regional government systems, the approval by the European Commission of the European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation Galicia–northern Portugal, and the current socio-economic environment, this chapter discusses the possibility of combining key-strategic domains in which Galicia-northern Portugal excels, joining forces, procedures and strategic tools in order to enhance the reputation, give visibility and echo the cross-border advantage of this European regional conurbation. In addition, this chapter intends to shed some light on the empirical significance of a cross-border place-branding strategy able to encourage entrepreneurship, job creation, trade and investment. It draws important lessons from the idea of interregional place branding and aims to encourage a unique cross-border storyline. This chapter also aims to contribute to the academic debate on regional place branding, in line with the main research objective of this thesis, by discussing the potential development of place-branding initiatives across - administrative - border regions underpinned by knowledge from strategic spatial planning literature. Hence, the primary strand of reasoning postulated in this thesis - that is - place branding as strategic spatial planning instrument and the theoretical framework of the study are both explored within a cross-border spatial context.

7.1. Introduction

This chapter adopts a strategic spatial planning approach as an attempt to think strategically, innovatively and creatively in potential joint place-branding initiatives between cross-border regions, in a European context. The European region composed of the NUTS III Alto Minho, Cávado, Ave, Metropolitan Area of Porto/Área Metropolitana do Porto, Alto Tâmega, Tâmega e Sousa, Douro, and Terras de Trás-os-Montes of Northern Portugal (NUTS II) and the provinces of A Coruña, Lugo, Ourense and Pontevedra (NUTS III) of the Autonomous Community of Galicia (NUTS II) in northwest Spain is taken as a case study (see Figure 7.1.).

The Euroregion Galicia-northern Portugal has legal and institutional support by the Regulation number 1082 of 2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 July 2006 amended accordingly to Regulation number 1302 of 2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 (European Union, 2006; 2013). The European Council (EC) regulation formally established the European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation Galicia and northern Portugal (GNP-EGTC) or Agrupamento Europeu de Cooperação Territorial Galicia-Norte de Portugal (Portuguese) orAgrupamento Europeo de Cooperación Territorial Galicia-Norte de Portugal (Galician). This institutional body, in operation since 1 March, 2010, represents the continuous effort from the European Union to enhance cooperation, strengthen ties and develop networks between cross-border European regions.
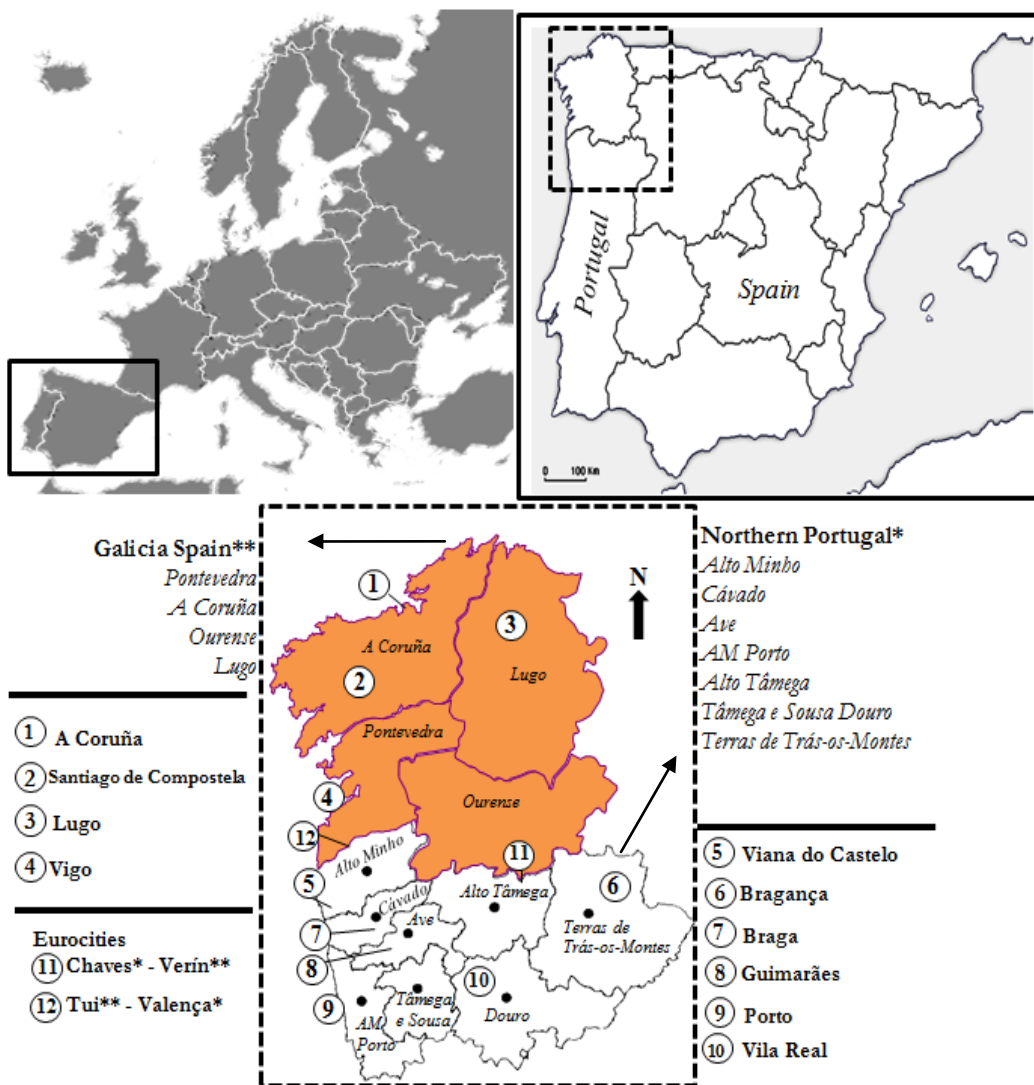
Figure 7.1. The Euroregion Galicia-northern Portugal, the main cities (1-10) and the two Eurocities (11; 12).

The region Galicia–northern Portugal overlaps physical borders and is composed by the territories between the Bay of Biscay (northwest Spain) and the River Douro (northern Portugal). The regions of Galicia and Northern Portugal have a long tradition in cross-border cooperation (OECD, 2012a; 2012b; CCDRN, 2014d). Furthermore, both regions have enjoyed centuries of shared history, culture and roots. These roots date back to the Iron Age, the Castro culture and Celtic presence in the territory of "Gallaecia" (3rd-6th centuries). Linguistic similarities between Galician and Portuguese, years of unity until the foundation of the kingdom of Portugal in 1139, a shared sense of identity and spatial proximity (border regions) can be seen as the key "ingredients" in designing a joint cross-border branding strategy and building regional leverage for a unique Galicia-North Portugal region (Oliveira, 2015g). Cross-border trade, economic affairs and labour force

mobility have also been characterising the cross-border cooperation between Spain and Portugal. In recognition of the strong existing links between these two regions, the spatial and cognitive proximity, the networks established between public entities (for example, between Xunta de Galicia and CCDRN) as well as the legal framework (that is, GNP-EGTC), it makes sense to classify it as a cross-border region and hence think strategically about possible joint cross-border branding exercises.

The last decade of the 20th century has seen a strong surge in the number of cross-border regions all over Europe. Nowadays, there are more than seventy cross-border regions in Europe, operating under names such as "Euroregions", "EUREGIO", and "Working Communities" (Perkmann, 2003). However, these European conurbations were undersupplied by legal frameworks until 2006, when the European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC) was established. Medeiros (2011) argues that the implementation of an EGTC could effectively operationalise cross-border activities such as common transport, sustainable development, environmental protection and regional promotion. This chapter applies the notion of cross-border European region to refer to the Euroregion Galicia–northern Portugal.

The theoretical background of this chapter follows the topical developments on the strategic spatial planning literature in Europe (for example Friedmann, 1987; Healey, 1997a; 1997b; Hillier, 2002; Albrechts, 2004, 2006, 2010a, 2013; Balducci *et al.,* 2011) and on interregional and inter-territorial place branding (for example Oliveira, 2015c; Zenker and Jacobsen, 2015; Pedersen, 2004; Hosper 2004; 2006; Andersson 2007; Pasquinelli 2013; Pasquinelli and Teräs 2013). The discussion around the concept of Euroregions and the changes at the Portuguese–Spanish border are supported by Medeiros (2011) and Amante (2013).

This strategic spatial planning approach to cross-border place-branding seemed most needed in a moment where the European discourse on internal borders promoted the conceptualisation of cross-border cooperation and transnational integration. The cross-border cooperation emerged as a new paradigm of economic and social development. In addition, cross-border areas were presented as an effective effort to strategically overcoming the traditional isolation of border territories.

The European efforts to design territorial strategies and multilayer relational networks across the European Union borders reoriented the practice of spatial planning towards a more strategic approach to everyday challenges (Albrechts *et al.,* 2003; Healey, 1997a; Salet and Faludi, 2000). Changes related to the globalization process, the dematerialisation of European internal borders and the enlargement of the EU resulted in rhetoric and idealism upon the inevitability of living in a borderless world (Amante, 2013) with consequent impact at the spatial level. The European and national political discourses emphatically reinvoked the idea of a Europe of the Regions, linking the notion of four freedoms: free movement of goods, services, people and capital (Rumford, 2006). Certain spatial functions, traditionally led by national borders, were questioned, and Europeans were introduced to supranational spaces, namely, the single market and the Schengen space (Amante, 2013), with implications in the European political and competitiveness agenda and cohesion policy. Some details on the historical evolution of the creation of the geographical dimension of Euroregion are further provided.

The global competition, the growing complexity and the challenges posed to diverse spatial scale entities, as cities, regions and transnational geographical entities boost the practice of undertaking

cross-border territorial cooperation in order to enhance their competitiveness and strengthen their positioning and territorial visibility. According to Pasquinelli (2013), territorial competition, cooperation and co-opetition are viable strategies for place branding at different scales. Place branding offers a potential collaborative linkage between departments within place authorities at different spatial scales. Also, strategic spatial planning seems able to deal with multi-scale spatial challenges and transformations in an innovative and emancipatory way (Albrechts, 2013).

The spatial dimension involved in this exploratory study (cross-border region) brings challenges to a potential cross-border branding exercise. It includes eight sub-regions from the Portuguese side and four provinces on the Spanish side, both member states of the European Union since 1986. Furthermore, this area has since 2010 an institutional and legal support from the GNP-EGTC. In addition, this chapter encounters complexity as different approaches towards strategic spatial planning and dissimilar systems of regional government and decision-making capacity are involved. Underpinned by knowledge from the strategic spatial planning literature and spatial planners as catalysts and initiators of change (Albrechts, 1999 and as argued in chapter 1), this chapter tries to shed some light on potential joint place-branding synergies between the cross-border areas of Galicia and Northern Portugal. Furthermore, bearing in mind all the aforementioned opportunities and threats of branding places, the chapter will clarify if a cross-border place-branding initiative is likely to encourage the following, in times of financial and economic crisis in both countries:

- Cross-border trade and investment attraction in key-strategic domains (see below);
- Cross-border investment, infrastructure improvements and spatial development, including the development of cultural tourism (also related with the pilgrimage route of Santiago de Compostela);
- Cross-border research and investigation in areas in which the region as expertise;
- Cross-border entrepreneurship, employment and labour mobility.

To go hand in hand with acknowledged difficulties of developing a cross-border branding strategy, through transnational strategic spatial planning, for two sovereign territories (Portugal and Spain) and member states of a supranational institution (European Union), this chapter aims to contribute to a more consistent understanding of the theory and practice of place branding across administrative geographical border areas, contributing, thus strengthen the line of reasoning of this thesis.

7.2. Defining borders and cross-border geographical areas in Europe

Territoriality is frequently the basis for development of social, economic and cultural milieus. In addition, a territory can assume different political, legal, institutional and administrative bounds.

If political theory defines borders as the outcome of institutional processes, often as a consequence of political power skirmishes such as wars or royal negotiations, borders are addressed differently in other theoretical approaches (Yndigegn, 2013). Common sense defines borders as territorial demarcations between neighbouring countries. Borders are socially constructed as a result

of everyday social and communal interactions (Yndigegn, 2013). The border between Portugal and Spain is a historical and political construction achieved through concessions, negotiations and exchanges between Portuguese and Spanish authorities (Amante, 2013). Emotional elements such as national pride, notoriety, positioning and as icons of national identity, borders have defined the geography of the two European countries and, as consequence, the social and cooperative networks. Borders have also defined competitive diplomatic discussions and have been driving a number of transnational infrastructures (for example tunnels, roads, bridges).

As a matter of fact, alike in the past, a considerable number of European regions try to out-compete each other in a fear of becoming less attractive for investment, for tourism, for working or for living. The remarkable overall growth in establishing multilevel relational networks across the EU border areas has changed the European geography, paving the way for the Europe of the Regions (see Perkmann, 2003; Medeiros, 2011). Nevertheless, according to Amante (2013), one must be critical about the political oratory of a European geography composed of regions. Moreover, discussing the relevance of borders within the idea of a Europe of the Regions becomes paramount (Bucken-Knapp and Shack, 2001; Anderson *et al.,* 2003). There was much talk in the 1970s of a Europe of the regions - the idea of the nation-state unravelling at the edges, however, this did not happen in practice. Arguably the nation state seems stronger at current times than in the past. For instance, Portugal is more of a unitary state than Spain. Portugal is deployed of regional government and has a weak regional expression if compared to Spain. In line with Oliveira (2015c), Galicia has also stronger identity - as a region - than northern Portugal.

On the European discourse towards a refreshed EU geography, concepts of cross-border cooperation and transnational integration have emerged as an almost magic solution to overcome the territorial depression of several EU border areas. However, the growing of networks and partnerships that connect a wider range of local and regional actors into cross-border cooperation process has increased the need to clarify the Euroregion concept (Medeiros, 2011), cross-border areas and the role of the new European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation.

7.3. Cross-border regions, Euroregion and the role of EGTC Galicia-northern Portugal

Developing thoughts regarding the geographical concept that better fits the European cross-border areas is fundamental regarding the confusion this geographical dimension of cross-border brings (see Perkmann, 2003; Medeiros, 2011). Some of the cross-border cooperation entities in operation at the European level call themselves Euroregions. A Euroregion must be able to develop strategic-oriented cross-border cooperation in a multilevel partnership (that is, European, governmental, regional, and local) in different development domains, such as mobility, economy, culture and sports, tourism and leisure, transports, environment, health, energy, communications, education, innovation and technology.

The first official cross-border region, the *EUREGIO*, was established in 1958 on the Dutch–German border, in the area of Enschede (the Netherlands) and Gronau (Germany). Since then, such "Euroregions" and other forms of cross-border cooperation have emerged throughout Europe contributing to redraw the political European map, for instance, by reducing the barrier effect, contributing to cost-efficiency of transnational investments and reinforcing common development

strategies (Medeiros, 2011). For local and regional governments, engaging in cross-border cooperation exercises signifies a change of the paradigm by entering a field long reserved for central authorities. Early cross-border cooperation policies were significantly informed by spatial planning theories and practices. However, in the 1960s and 1970s, various bilateral and multilateral governmental commissions were established without granting access to local authorities (Perkmann, 2003).

Despite the tangible and intangible closeness between Galicia and northern Portugal, it was only with the EU membership of Spain and Portugal (1986) that the foundations of successful cross-border cooperation could be built. The establishment of the Working Community Galicia–northern Portugal in 1991 and cross-border cooperation programmes under INTERREG has created benefits that are today enjoyed by a resident population of approximately 6.5 million. The INTERREG IVC (2007-2013) has now been replaced by INTERREG Europe for the period between 2014 and 2020 and Working Communities have been progressively replaced by the European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation (European Union, 2011).

The overall purpose of an EGTC is further to develop and broaden the common border areas towards improving connectivity, infrastructures, enhancing socio-economic and institutional integration, promoting employment, reinforcing competitiveness and to promote territorial cooperation, thus contributing to meet the objectives of the EU 2020 strategy. In line with the mentioned Regulation 1082/2006, the EGTC Galicia–northern Portugal was officially established in 2010, thus formalizing years of healthy trade and cultural relationships as well as language similarities between Galicia and the northern Portugal region. Recently, the EGTCs have started publishing their joint investment programmes. The GNP-EGTC has also published their Joint Investment Programme Galicia-northern Portugal 2014-2020 (GNP-EGTC, 2014) a document further analysed in this chapter. The GNP-EGTC could also assume a primary role in developing cross-border branding efforts and strategic spatial planning arrangements. This will also be debated further below.

7.4. Strategic spatial planning, cross-border regions and cross-border cooperation

Different forms of multilevel governance have a long history in Europe with impact upon spatial planning. During the 1980s, strategic spatial planning was at a stationary point of evolution (Healey, 1997a; Salet and Faludi, 2000). Instead, urban and regional planning practices were particularly concentrated on projects, mainly for the revival of run-down parts of cities and regions, and on land use regulation. The end of the 20th century saw new efforts in many areas of Europe to produce strategies for cities, sub-regions and regions (Salet and Faludi, 2000).

Efforts in spatial-planning strategy making, involve the construction of new institutional arenas within structures of government that are themselves changing through time. The objectives are, in a nutshell, and following previous chapters of this thesis, the need to improve the articulation towards a more coherent spatial logic for land use regulation, resource protection and investments in regeneration and infrastructure and spatial competitiveness and development. According to Albrechts *et al.,* (2003), strategic frameworks and visions for territorial development, in a Europe undergoing progressive expansion, are demanding specific spatial development initiatives and proactive approaches towards contemporary challenges and global competitive arena.

Following the line of reasoning of Albrechts *et al.,* (2003), Fürst (2001) and Kunzmann (2001), the concentration of efforts on the spatial relations of territories offers a more effective way of integrating economic, environmental, cultural and social policy agendas. In addition, a territorial focus also provides a promising basis for encouraging levels of government to work together and in partnership with actors in diverse positions in the economy and civic society (Fürst, 2001; Kunzmann, 2001). Recently, Albrechts (2013) has suggested reframing of strategic spatial planning. Strategic spatial planning could be seen as a possible approach to deal with societies' economic, social and political challenges in an innovative, creative, coordinated and transformative way, as I have extensively argued in chapters 2 and 5. Strategic spatial planning could support a progressive change in practice, while the government loads onto the term a series of aspirations for policy change at various levels, as economic and social implemented through strategic initiatives, including at the cross-border spatial level. Strategic initiatives are focused on the understanding of the holistic situation, the definition of realistic general goals, and orientation of available strengths and persistence of the action until significant results have been achieved, as at the competitive agenda (Albrechts, 2004). Investment in infrastructure and urban redevelopment, mainly focused on city and regions, relates to well-established arguments about the importance of place qualities, values and knowledge in economic development and spatial transformation in an integrative manner (Albrechts *et al.* 2003).

The European integration agenda, broadly speaking, is aimed at reducing hierarchies of spatial administrative levels while building stronger institutional capacity at regional and sub-regional levels. For several times, this process involves cross-border cooperation. The core objectives of cross-border cooperation are to reduce the negative effects of borders as administrative, legal and physical barriers, tackle common problems and exploit untapped potential (European Union, 2011). According to Perkmann (2003), cross-border regions have thrived in particular because of their increasingly relevant role as implementation units for European regional policy in a context of multilevel governance.

The approach explored in this chapter moves towards a development of synergies onto cross-border place branding by emphazising the knowledge and values of strategic spatial planning. According to Van Assche and Lo (2011), "place branding can enhance the stability of planning strategies" (p. 118). In line with Van Assche and Lo (2011), other scholars and following the primary strand of reasoning of this thesis, a strategic spatial planning approach to branding regions across administrative borders would give visibility to strategic initiatives and enhance the notoriety and increase the recognition of cross-border regions. In addition, it would also strengthening the competitive position and facilitating cross-border multi-sector cooperation, namely, for entrepreneurship, investment and talent attraction as well as talent retention initiatives.

7.5. Debating the primary strand of reasoning of this thesis - place branding as strategic spatial planning instrument at the cross-border spatial level

Strategic spatial planning, as opposed to strategic corporate planning, is an intrinsically political activity (Friedmann, 2004). The reasons are varied. For Mastop (1998, cited in Albrechts 2004), strategic spatial planning in Europe dates back to the 1920s and 1930s where it was used by public and private actors in support to spatial challenges as well as a response to the economic depression in the traditional industrial areas of Europe. The primary strategic spatial planning literature states that strategic spatial planning is not a single concept, procedure or tool but a set of concepts, procedures and tools that must be tailored carefully to different situations. Strategic plans are also not the outcome of a legal obligation (see Quinn, 1980; Healey, 1997a; Kunzmann, 2000; Albrechts, 2004, 2010a, 2013). According to Albrechts (2013), strategic spatial planning is able to support a strategic change, at urban and regional level, changing agendas and thus socially and economically improving places by using different instruments, for instance, place branding (Oliveira, 2015a). All European Union member states, except the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland, use detailed planning instruments, such as regulatory zoning instruments, building control instruments, and implementation instruments. However, new approaches are requested following the market conditions of a global society.

Spatial planners now have to assume different roles. Spatial planners, strategic planners, as geographers, ethnographers and marketers, among a vast list of other experts are exponentially developing place branding at different scales (that is, neighbourhood, countries, cities, regions, cross-administrative territories) and different scopes (that is, investment, trade, talent, tourism). Despite theoretical and methodological developments in place branding (see chapter 1, 2, 5), it has been asserted that the practice demonstrates significant misconceptions. I have been debating, throughout this thesis, on one of these misconceptions - that is the correct integration of place branding with spatial planning and spatial planning strategies (Oliveira, 2015a) and policy-making (Ashworth, 2011a). In this chapter, I therefore elaborate on the lacuna in place-branding literature which overlooks inter-territorial branding or branding across administrative borders (Pasquinelli, 2013). To fill that noticeable rational fissure in place-branding literature, this chapter adopts the primary strand of reasoning postulated in this thesis - place branding as a strategic spatial planning instrument - to facilitate developments of branding initiatives for cross-border regions.

Branding cross-border geographical entities is arguably challenging as it involves different governmental structures, there is a need to balance cultural and identity gaps as well as different languages, in most of the cases (Kavaratzis *et al.,* 2015). The approach explored in this chapter clarifies that the integration of branding in strategic spatial planning at the cross-border level could be an effective way to build uniqueness, enhance distinctive features across borders and design a unique branding storyline.

The approach taken here follows the argumentation discussed in previous chapters. In addition, the work of Oliveira (2015a; 2015b; 2015c; 2015g), Kavaratzis *et al.* (2015), Zenker and Jacobsen (2015), Mintzberg (1994), Ashworth and Kavaratzis (2010), Pasqui (2011) and Albrechts (2013) are also of relevance. In my perspective, there are three main reasons to follow a strategic spatial planning approach for cross-border place-branding:

(1) **Strategically thinking about the future of cross-border regions:** The construction of visions of the future for territories, in the context of joint initiatives, strategic arrangements and consensus building between regional actors and civic society. As cross-border territories are organized by multiple actors and different levels of government, strategic spatial planning could establish solid links for effective decision-making and strategic networks to envision better futures for the area, thus contribute to joint branding initiatives.

(2) **Integrating decision-making and cross-border branding:** If one accepts that the constituent elements of places are linked with others in distant politically and administratively geographies, one may also aim to reconsider the definition of inter-territorial competition and cross-border cooperation. Territories are involved in highly complex relations of co-dependency, cooperation and co-opetition, at the national and transnational levels. Therefore, oversimplifying the relations only to competition may lead to economic and social imbalances. An integrated approach to place branding may support cohesive decision-making concerning agreements of cooperation, coalition of place actors and development of joint strategic tools. Through strategic spatial planning, as opposed to the one-size-fits-all approach and the all too often blind and frenetic rush to attract investment, talent and tourists. In addition, context-sensitive interventions will prepare the territory and further encourage a cross-border branding strategy (this is further explored in chapter 8).

(3) **Reinforcing coordination mechanisms in cross-border regions:** Strategic spatial planning has a core of objectives which include coordination and/or convergence between sectoral policies around a disparity of governments, such as in cross-border areas. Furthermore, flexibility and adaptability to circumstances of strategic planning could be an advantage when building cross-border branding strategies. Tailor-made approaches to cross-border branding are suited to enhance place assets and spatial qualities and bring together divergent voices. Ultimately, designed to satisfy the primary needs of the communities and design a unique storyline for shared futures.

The European effort to revitalise a government-led strategic interventions at the urban and regional level has also been used to reposition cities and regions in the expanding economic and political landscape of the EU and of globalising economic relations (Albrechts *et al.*, 2003). The European integration and the challenges posed by globalisation reassert the importance of local and regional identity and image of Europe and the European Union, as a whole, the relevance of the competitiveness agenda and strengthening the ties of cross-border cooperation.

As noted above, there is a theoretical framework to discuss the value of cross-border branding exercises, as this seems a valuable approach to enhance strategic orientations. Furthermore, it could be possible to align border planning systems. Strategic spatial planning, a field of practices of varying nature (for example political-institutional, social), is designed to create conditions for integration between decision-making networks and cooperative ties among regional actors. Furthermore, it is

able to change the cross-border competitiveness agenda and support territories to stay shining on the map of attractiveness.

This approach goes beyond the norm on interregional place-branding research. Even the literature offers us what is now a structured discussion of the reasons why in some geographical units, such as cities, researchers and spatial planners, have engaged with strategic spatial planning (Balducci *et al.* 2011); I have decided to experiment and carefully observe the linkage with branding across administrative territories, such as Galicia and Northern Portugal. In this sense strategic spatial planners are called to assume a role as enhancers of processes of integration between decision-making networks and regional actors from both sides of a border, and this is adding value to cross-border branding exercise.

7.6. Background of the case study: Galicia–northern Portugal

Galicia is Spain's most western autonomous community, and is bordered to the south by Portugal. With approximately 2.8 million inhabitants and a territorial area of around 30,000 km2, the region is sparsely populated (with a population density of 95 individuals per km2 in 2011); it accounts for 6 per cent of Spain's population and 5.5 per cent of national gross domestic product (GDP) in 2011. Galicia has its own language (Galician) and has always preserved a strong sense of regional identity. The geography of the region is characterized by 1700 km of coastline as well as rugged terrain. It has an elected regional government: the Xunta de Galicia. Galicia has strong trade and cultural relationships with Portugal, especially with its Northern region (OECD, 2012a).

Northern Portugal, without an institutionalized level of government (policy-making is centralized in the national government), as I have argued in chapter 5, is supported in terms of regional development and cohesion by the North Regional Coordination and Development Commission (CCDRN), has a territorial area of around 21,000 km2 with approximately 3.7 million inhabitants (with a population density of 176 individuals per km2 in 2011); it accounts for 35 per cent of Portugal's population and 28.3 per cent of national GDP in 2011 (Table 7.1.). CCDRN, a body that has administrative and financial autonomy, but which is appointed by the central Portuguese government, is tasked with coordinating and promoting governmental policies with regard to regional planning and development, environment, land-use management, and inter-regional and cross-border cooperation, mainly with Galicia.

The peripherality and trans-frontier geography of GNP have exacerbated the decline of traditional agricultural and industrial activities that face increasing competition within and beyond the EU. Both regions are currently facing economic and social imbalances which have been affecting the citizens directly. Table 7.1. shows the key figures of the cross-border region, with particular focus on macroeconomic indicators.

Table 7.1. Key social and economic figures for Spain, Portugal, Galicia and northern Portugal.

Indicators	Spain	Galicia (Spain)	Portugal	Northern Portugal
Population				
Resident population (N.)* (3rd Quarter 2014)	46,464,001	**2,748,695** (6% of Spain)	10,427,301	**3,694,152** (35% of Portugal)
Population density (No./ km²) (2011)**	93.3	**94.5**	115.4	**175.8**
Labour-Market				
Unemployment rate (%)* (30th September, 2014)	23.7	**20.2**	16.2	**17.1** (14.2 % in the 1st quarter of 2015)
Youth Unemployment (%)* (4th Quarter 2013)	54.9 (16-29 years)	**36.6** (16-29 years)	38.1 (15-24 years)	**35.4** (15-24 years)
Economic-Indicators				
GDP (thousands of euros)** (2011)	1,063,355	**58,001** (5.5% of Spain)	171,040	**48,403** (28.3% of Portugal)
GDP *per capita* (thousands of euros)** (2011)	23.1	**21.2**	16.1	**12.9**
Tourist arrivals* (2012)	93,674,522	**3,838,07** (4.1% of Spain)	14,088,295	**2,779,406** (19.7% of Portugal)
World Economic Forum*** *Global Competitiveness Index* (2014-15) (*)1-7 (best)	35th position [(4.5(*))]	--	36th position [(4.5(*))]	--
World Economic Forum*** *Capacity of companies to innovate* (2014-15) (*)1=not at all; 7=to a great extent	60th position [(3.8(*))]	--	37th position [(4.3(*))]	--

Source: author's elaboration based on *Eurostat (2014), ***Xunta de Galicia* (2013), ***World Economic Forum (2014).

The gross domestic product has registered negative variation rates since 2007. The unemployment rate is above 15 per cent in both regions and the youth unemployment is dramatically high in both regions - above 35 per cent. The level of unemployment request strong measures to bring back the hope to the youth in both sides of the border.

7.7. Content analysis of Joint Investment Programme Galicia-northern Portugal 2014-2020

The analysis of the content of the Joint Investment Programme Galicia-northern Portugal 2014-2020 published by GNP-EGTC in March 2014 supports the present discussion. The primary economic domains identified (Table 7.2.) reveal the strategic domains that could be combined, fuelling, thus, a potential cross-border brand (see the column GNP strategic-domains combined in Table 7.2.).

Embracing a branding process by focusing on place-specific qualities, in line with the theoretical framework of the study discussed in chapter 5, seems to respond to the call Boschma (2014) has made to design tailored actions that take region-specific assets as a starting point to create momentum and generate job opportunities. In line with Table 7.2., GNP could explore the connectivity of key economic domains - as life sciences, agro-food-oriented activities and tourism, among others. Exploring links between and within sectors would demand for joining forces, engagement with regional actors, as well as community involvement in order to design a unique cross-border brand and at the same time reinforce the image of each region and their brands.

Table 7.2. Galicia-northern Portugal-specific qualities/key-strategic domains combined.

Key-strategic economic domains		Combining key-strategic domains at the cross-border level
Galicia	**Northern Portugal**	**Galicia-northern Portugal**
Fishing	Sea economy	Sea-oriented activities
Sea activities	Renewable energies	(for example, energy production)
		Sea-food industry
Life sciences	Agro-food activities	Food-oriented research
Health-oriented activities	Life sciences	Health-oriented research
Cultural and natural heritage	Cultural tourism	Cultural and heritage tourism
		(for example, pilgrimage, traditions)
Environment	Textile and Clothing	Technical textiles
Energy	Footwear	(for example, sportswear, workwear)
Green-biotechnology	ICT services	Environmental-oriented ICT
	Green industries	Biotechnology industries

Source: own elaboration based on GNP-EGTC (2014).

Following the GNP-EGTC (2014), synergies between Galician sea-oriented activities could be combined with the sea-economy initiatives of northern Portugal. The traditions of the textile industry and shoemaking/footwear could be explored synergistically with the universities and research centres of the Euroregion, for instance with the 3B's Research Group and CITEVE-Technological Institute for Textiles and Clothing and the International Iberian Nanotechnology

Laboratory located in northern Portugal, which could contribute to job creation and fundamentally to its maintenance. Technical textiles, which require knowledge transfer between universities and industry, could support the retention of an expert labour force. Tourism, particularly cultural tourism and tourism associated with religious sites, which is robust on both sides of the border, and the historical and cultural background, are likely to boost regional feelings (of belonging to Galicia-northern Portugal).

Analysis suggests that the potential joint branding strategy would be more effective in providing greater visibility to the Euroregion GNP and communicate its regional excellence, if it is sustained with strong cooperative ties between key regional actors and communities, research laboratories, universities and technology transfer agencies. Recent advances in technical textiles, bio-and nanotechnology (know-why), combined with traditional industry (know-how), will echo the cross-border advantage. Furthermore, a branding strategy could support the communication of GNP assets (tangible/intangible), position, and give visibility to the outside and inside region alike (know-where or spatial dimension). The cultural and linguistic background of GNP could play a key role in the success of a potential joint branding strategy.

There are similarities, cognitive and spatial proximity as well as institutional willingness to position the Euroregion as a whole. The abovementioned joint programme developed by the GNP-EGTC has proposed the development of a marketing plan for the Euroregion which can be considered as a starting point towards a joint cross-border branding strategy. However, I argue that to build uniqueness stronger spatial planning strategies are need, in both sides of the border, to improve the socio-spatial and spatial-economic condition.

7.8. Discussing a cross-border branding strategy for Galicia–northern Portugal

Cross-border cooperation between Galicia and the North region of Portugal is shifting towards improving local competitiveness but also headed for creating stronger cooperation ties. In the past, infrastructure investment brought people together (for example bridges, railways), with positive impact on labour mobility, trade and cross-border investment. Nowadays other joint areas of interest have been identified. Ambitions on joint programmes and organizations set up to improve cooperation in areas such as employment, small business support, environmental planning, heritage conservation, urban regeneration, tourism, university research, risk prevention, socio-economic integration and technical assistance are leading the work on both sides of the border.

The new type of cooperation focused on science, technology and strategic nanotechnology could be seen as a positive move for the cross-border region Galicia–northern Portugal, for instance to tackle the high youth unemployment rate. With future strategic thinking and making the right strategies in spatial planning in both regions, a joint place-branding strategy could position and thus add value to the region. A cross-border place-branding strategy would require strong effort among the key regional and national actors of Portugal and Spain.

A cross-border branding strategy for Galicia–northern Portugal could play an important role in facilitating/simplifying the communication that both regions (and as consequence the Euroregion a whole) is planning, implementing structural changes, encouraging long-term strategic vision, providing integration among a range of sectoral and multi-spatial level plans (for example European,

Spain, Portugal, NUTS II, NUTS III, Autonomous Community) and improving engagement with regional actors and communities. It would be a long-term plan for earning and maintaining a distinctive, positive and competitive cross-border regional reputation, both within the region and around the world. These aims could be achieved through a joint strategic spatial planning exercise at the cross-border level. A joint exercise able to harmonise and highlight cross-border innovation, creativity, authenticity, policy making, international relations and public diplomacy, investment and export promotion, tourism and cultural relations. Furthermore, collaboration and cooperation among inter-territorial unities offer the chance to achieve a higher quality of international promotion campaigns at lower costs for regional actors, thus improving the cost-effectiveness of initiatives (Pasquinelli, 2013).

Objectives such as the development of joint economic, social and environmental cross-border activities geared towards regional territorial development also drive cross-border branding. Accordingly, I underline that a joint cross-border place-branding initiative to the cross-border Euroregion Galicia–northern Portugal could be able to support and encourage:

- **Cross-border trade:**
  - Facilitating cooperation among trade associations and enterprises;
  - Sharing the participation in national and international trade fairs;
  - Sharing trade facilities and joining forces for efficient resource management.

- **Cross-border infra-structure developments:**
  - Sharing facilities for cross-border mobility (for example by improving railway networks connecting the main Galicia–northern Portugal cities);
  - Improving virtual networks and communication technologies.

- **Cross-border investment and tourism development**:
  - Sharing facilities and social and human capital for joint investment. Promote synergies to support industrial production (for example exchanging know-how in areas in which both regions excel). Therefore, support economies of scale and efficient use of non-renewable resources;
  - Taking advantage of the tourism potential in both sides of the border (for example the pilgrimage routes to Santiago de Compostela, River Douro, wine and gastronomy, promoting cross-border cultural touring);
  - Promoting cross-border sensemaking by taking advantage of the historical roots of Galicia and Northern Portugal to construct project orientations for the future (for example cultural events, historical recreations) – short-term actions embedded in long-term strategic visions (both tailor-made and context sensitive);

- **Cross-border research and development projects**:
    - Sharing facilities to capitalise nanotechnology, bioscience and biomaterials research (for example enhance the regional role of the International Iberian Nanotechnology Laboratory; the 3B's Research Group – Biomaterials, Biodegradables and Biomimetics, both located in Braga, Northern Portugal; and other research centres in Galicia);
    - Sharing facilities for utilisation of laboratories and best practices in academic research (for example agro-food, health, regenerative medicine, high-tech textile materials, nano-products and renewable energy – linking with the key strategic domains identified in chapter 5);
    - Sharing procedures and strategic tools for talent attraction and retention, both from inside as well as outside the region.

- **Cross-border entrepreneurship, employment and labour mobility:**
    - Facilitating strategic network enterprise–university;
    - Exploring synergies with other territories (that is, EU and non-EU regions) to incentive start-up and spin-off developments;
    - Facilitating cross-border mobility of talented people to support knowledge creation and patent development;
    - Facilitating entrepreneurship networks (for example cross-border workshops).

One can argue that the above strategic goals are excessively ambitious. To achieve them through a joint cross-border branding strategy, integrated as an instrument of strategic cross-border planning, requires political decisions (both place branding and strategic spatial planning are inherently political activities) and effective administrative mechanisms in both regions. Designing a cross-border branding process by linking place branding and strategic spatial planning, in a context of permanent changes, uncertainty and desired transformations, within two distort approaches to spatial planning, regional development and government, is a challenge in itself and requires continuous research and practical experiments.

The historical background of togetherness, the cultural roots and identity ties are clearly an advantage towards a common Galicia-northern Portugal brand storyline. However, the different government systems could be seen as a possible barrier. The absence of regional legislative and decision-making capacity in Portugal, the diverse and fragmented regional assets, and the current socio-economic environment of both regions all require regional coordination efforts, territorial reorganization, stronger cooperation bonds as well as rethinking the modes of regional government, particularly in northern Portugal.

The GNP-EGTC could play a key role as a policy platform facilitating the cooperation between two distinctive territories and rendering them more competitive as a unique geographical entity. The working philosophy of GNP-EGTC could be highlighted as an example for other cross-border regions trying to explore synergies among them. The GNP-EGTC has capabilities, as well as access

to financial means, to draw cross-border strategies by exploring related strategic domains to further constructing a regional advantage, turning different types of knowledge into innovation and making it known within and beyond borders.

7.9. Conclusions

Strategic spatial planning is increasingly seen as a critical feature that reflects the capacity of a system to absorb disturbance and reorganize without collapsing. In addition, the globalisation leads to processes involving a change in the perception of distance (the stretching of all kinds of social, cultural, political and economic relations across space and time). In fact, the search for strategic thinking in place branding to face global competition, and the emergence of virtual regions, due the complexity of networks and panacea of information communication technologies, becomes paramount. In addition, scarce means of funding at the European level, triggering transformation and change and, finally, the internationalisation of territories, are drivers of cross-border branding and, at the same time, increase the demand for a resilient approach to resources management and long-term strategic visions. Moreover, the added competition creates a dispute for visibility and for recognition of the quality, differentiation and competitiveness of their territorial economic specialisation and institutional density as in European countries.

Since the 1990s several places, especially in Europe, have used promotion policies to support their image and improve their competitive position. This process is especially noticeable in the contexts of globalisation, entrepreneurship and increased competition. Thus, within the frame of global competition, regions engage in inter-territorial cooperation initiatives aimed to enhance their competitiveness. In line with the Lisbon Strategy (European Union, 2000), and Europe 2020 strategy (European Union, 2010), I argue that there are frameworks for thinking in developing joint place-branding initiatives across member states, for instance between Galicia and northern Portugal.

From the analysis of the documents: i) Joint Investment Programme Galicia-northern Portugal 2014-2020 (GNP-EGTC, 2014); and ii) the European Territorial Cooperation – Building Bridges Between People, published by the EU (European Union, 2011), I also argue that there are windows of opportunity to develop joint cross-border branding exercises. It seems that there is political will; however, better coordination, organization and cooperation could support decision-making towards a unique regional brand and the same regional promotional storyline.

The EGTC, and the EU cross-border cooperation programmes, could be the institutional, financial and organizational support to encourage a multi-package of objectives in which branding could emerge. Given these recommendations, a joint cross-border branding initiative could give visibility and build a coherent and respected storyline of the region Galicia-northern Portugal, to both regions, to the region and to the outside world. A joint cross-border branding initiative could work as an anchor for the two regions and their potential brands, not eliminating characteristics or strategic domains, but combining them towards a more attractive region.

A strategic spatial planning approach to cross-border place branding, supported by consistent image building, a strong vision and consensus building, will allow development of unique and distinct identities over geographic boundaries. In addition, this could be the key to bring together contradictory voices to develop and agree on shared visions for future regional development,

contributing to job creation and general well-being of Gallegos and Portuguese citizens. A successful cross-border brand requires the right ideas, the right mind-set, the right people and the right strategy and resources at the right time. Designing a comprehensive cross-border branding strategy, responding to all the opportunities and satisfying all demands, and in a multi-scalar context, can be a tough task, however, not impossible. Yet, it is acknowledged that bringing all regional actors together to share the same vision and branding aims will remain a tough task and that there will be difficulties towards mutual agreement for decision-making arrangements.

One real challenge of a joint cross-border branding strategy for the Euroregion Galicia-northern Portugal would be the articulation with regional branding initiatives for each region (Galicia and northern Portugal) already in place or projected. I argue that if place-branding is taken as an instrument in strategic spatial planning the effectiveness of a common brand could unify regional interests from both sides of the border and actually enhance region brands and not diminish their value. In this regarding, the EGTC Galicia-northern Portugal could be a key-player; the Joint Investment Programme Galicia-northern Portugal 2014-2020 could be the key-policy document; the INTERREG Europe 2014-2020 could be the key-financial mechanism; and the spatial and cognitive proximity the key-ingredients to support an effective joint Galicia-northern Portugal brand (in line with Oliveira, 2015g).

PART C:
CONCLUSIONS

Chapter 8: Conclusions and future challenges

Chapter overview

This research project has dealt with the phenomenon of place branding, and its theoretical and empirical links with the strategic spatial planning approach. The aims of this concluding chapter are threefold. First, by revisiting the theory, it aims to debate new theoretical links between place branding and strategic spatial planning. The novel theoretical connections would strengthen the primary strand of reasoning discussed in the Introduction and subsequent chapters - place branding as a strategic spatial planning instrument. By revisiting the theory, the chapter will contribute to the maturation of the idea of branding places as a geographical/spatial phenomenon. In line with McCann (2009) and Van Ham (2008), Andersson (2015) argues that in the current conceptualizations of place branding, the dominant perspectives align place branding practices with mainstream marketing and business approaches, and little consideration has been given to its spatial connotations and associations. The point of departure for this thesis is a call to bring an alternative view to place branding, specifically at the regional scale, for which a strategic spatial planning approach has been employed. The regional dimension is justified, here, because region branding has thus far been largely neglected, as is argued by Zenker and Jacobsen (2015), among others. Secondly, after several years of research on place branding, certain unresolved issues remain that have provoked criticism of place branding and arguments against it (see, for example, Kavaratzis, 2008; Kavaratzis *et al.*, 2015). In addition, some scholars have pointed out some misalignments within the practice of strategic spatial planning - it has been said that strategic spatial planning destabilizes and challenges an institutionalized set of practices and cultures in spatial planning (see Olesen, 2011). This chapter also aims to address some of those unsolved issues, not in the vain hope of solving them but in an attempt to contribute to the discussion around them and to shed light on the search for answers and deeper understanding. Thirdly, this thesis ends with some concluding remarks in the hope that they will stimulate critical reflection on the future challenges and opportunities of place branding, as well as instruments in a strategic spatial planning approach. In addition, it aims to incentivize spatial planners to embrace the idea of place branding, not only in Portugal and its northern region but also beyond it.

8.1. Revisiting the theory and polishing the theoretical links between place branding and strategic spatial planning

In the past few decades, Albrechts has been devoting particular attention to strategic spatial planning. He has recently argued that strategic spatial planning faces major ontological and epistemological challenges, and that a more radical approach to spatial planning (Albrechts, 2015b) and to strategic spatial planning (Albrechts, 2015a) is needed. Ashworth, a pioneering scholar in developing place marketing and branding, has recently argued, together with Kavaratzis and Warnaby (Ashworth *et al.*, 2015), for the necessity of rethinking the theory and practice of place branding. As noted in the Introduction chapter, the main research objective of this Ph.D. thesis is precisely that - to contribute to the advancement and maturation of place branding as a field by approaching it as an instrument in the strategic spatial planning approach, thus lending a more strategic approach and

geographical/spatial consciousness to the practice. Despite the fact that the previous chapters have already provided some theoretically well-informed steps aimed at contributing to the theoretical refinement of place branding, this chapter is certainly not repetitive. It identifies new theoretical links between place branding and strategic spatial planning, thereby helping us to reflect on what can be done to radically revive strategic spatial planning (responding to the call made by Albrechts, 2015a; 2015b) and to rethink place branding (contributing to the exercise developed by Ashworth *et al.*, 2015 and Kavaratzis *et al.*, 2015) as a critical theory and praxis. First, this section revisiting the theory will review and reflect on the constituents for a renewal of the strategic spatial planning approach. Secondly, some reflections aimed at contributing to the rethinking of place branding will also be provided. Thirdly, based on previous reflections, alternative theoretical relationships between the two concepts will be discussed, thus reinforcing the primary/optimal strand of reasoning postulated in this Ph.D. In sum, this section will fulfil the thesis's main research objective - the refinement and maturation of place branding. The 3-R's model is summarized in Figure 8.1.
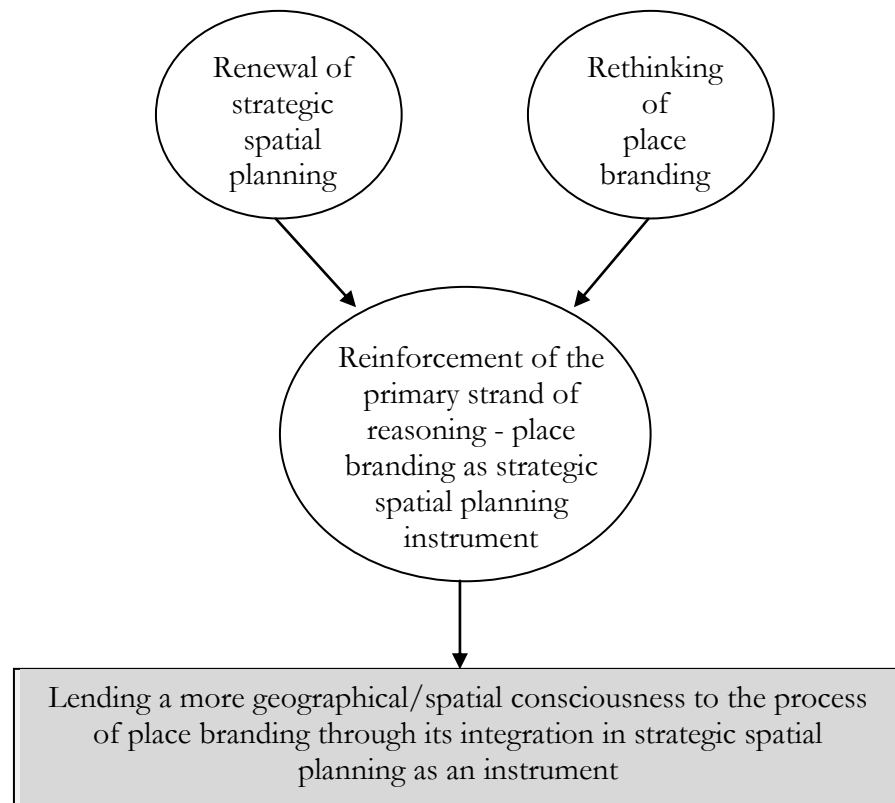

Figure 8.1. Section outline and the 3-R's model explained.
Source: own elaboration.

8.1.1. Constituents for a renewal of strategic spatial planning

Some scholars have been calling for new ideas and the renewal of existing spatial planning approaches - more specifically, that of strategic spatial planning (see Albrechts, 2015a; Kalliomäki, 2015; Albrechts and Balducci, 2013), while others have adopted a more critical stance to the strategic approach in spatial planning (Mäntysalo *et al.*, 2015; Olesen, 2014; Olesen and Richardson, 2012) or have requested alternative attitudes and the involvement of spatial planners in the search for new instruments to cope with challenges faced by societies (Albrechts, 2013; Oliveira, 2014c). Therefore, after briefly dealing with the logic and rationale of a renewal approach towards strategic spatial planning, as well as some critiques, this section sketches the contours of a more radical strategic planning approach that can contribute greatly to the reinforcement of its relationship with place branding.

Summing up what I have argued above: European regions, such as northern Portugal, like other geographical entities, are facing a complex range of issues that impact their socio-spatial and spatial-economic conditions. Some of these challenges are related to environmental issues (for example, global warming, flooding and air and water pollution) and accelerating urbanization, the rise of unemployment and an ageing population, the globalization of culture and the economy, the financial crisis and the subsequent economic crisis (see for example Albrechts, 2015a; Kalliomäki, 2015; Allmendinger and Haughton, 2010). Moreover, Albrechts (2010a; 2013) argues for the need to find the type of spatial planning that is necessary to deal with structural challenges. In addition, some scholars also argue that spatial planning and spatial planes must be prepared to support cities and regions to adjust to competition in global markets, and increase their attractiveness with different place promotion campaigns (Mäntysalo *et al.*, 2015). To meet such challenges and opportunities, some attempts have been made to develop an alternative approach to strategic spatial planning.

For Mäntysalo *et al.* (2015), in line with Albrechts and Balducci (2013), the characteristics of strategic spatial planning "give testimony to the need to create new kinds of strategic planning instruments, surpassing the means of statutory planning and the ideas behind them" (p. 171). Albrechts and Balducci (2013) developed a detailed analysis of a body of research regarding strategic spatial planning (see, for example, Albrechts, 1999, 2004, 2006; Albrechts *et al.*, 2003; Balducci, 2008; Balducci *et al.*, 2011; Healey, 1997a, 1997b, 2007; Mintzberg, 1994), in which they list a number of features that characterize strategic spatial planning. I have already alluded to them in the Introduction chapter, as well as in chapters 2 and 3. From this set of characteristics, however, I will underline here the key shifts in the strategic spatial planning approach that contribute to the renewal of strategic spatial planning, thus opening a theoretical window for new strategic planning instruments to come, such as place branding.

I have acknowledged the relevance and pertinence of developing arguments in line with the thoughts of some commentators (see, for example, Cerreta *et al.*, 2010; Olesen, 2011; 2014; Olesen and Richardson, 2012) who have been reflecting, although mainly theoretically, on the rise of strategic spatial planning and the strengthened neoliberal political climate. In addition, Albrechts (2015a), in the vein of Cerreta *et al.* (2010, p. x), Olesen (2011) and Sager (2013), underlines the fact that people are afraid that the ideal of strategic spatial planning could easily be used to favour the neoliberal models of urban and regional development. Despite the value of this debate to the theory

and practice of strategic spatial planning, I will focus here on what some scholars have been proposing as possible solutions in strategic spatial planning that resist the hegemonic discourses of neoliberalism, thus contributing to a reframing/renewal of the strategic approach to spatial planning (Albrechts, 2015a, 2015b; Mäntysalo *et al.*, 2015; Kalliomäki, 2015; Oliveira, 2014c, 2015a) – see Figure 8.2. for a diagram summarizing the basis for a renewal of the strategic spatial planning approach.
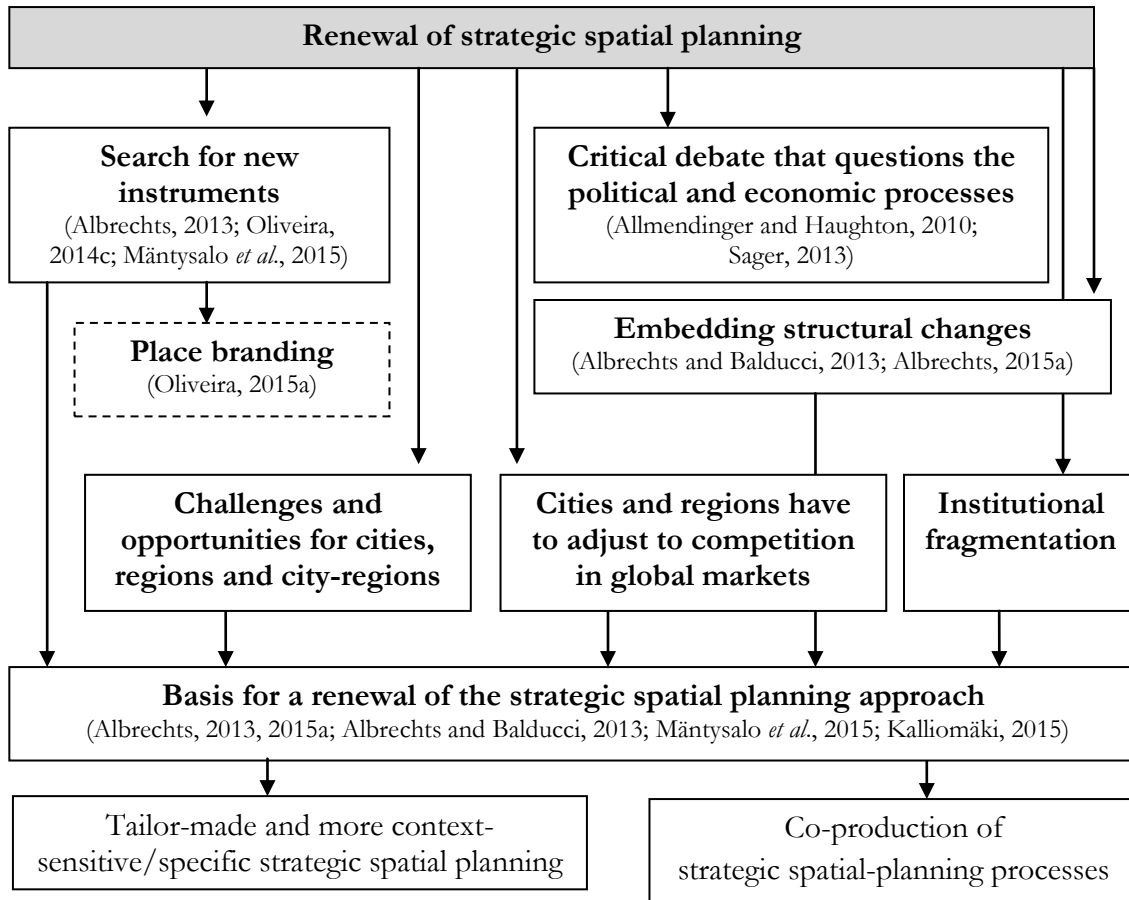

Figure 8.2. The basis for a renewal of the strategic spatial planning approach.
Source: own elaboration based on cited references.

In the next section, I sketch the basis for a renewal of the strategic spatial planning approach: i) tailor-made and more context-sensitive/specific strategic spatial planning; ii) co-production of strategic spatial planning processes.

8.1.2. Tailor-made and more context-sensitive/specific strategic spatial planning

Following the increase in the complexity faced by places, Albrechts (2015a) stresses that strategic spatial planning "must be tailored carefully to the situation at hand if desirable outcomes are to be achieved" (p. 512). It also needs to be sensitive to the spatial context in which the spatial strategies are embedded. This means that strategic spatial planning must be adaptive to changing circumstances by evolving, following the technological developments as well as scientific ones and local knowledge. Oliveira (2014d), in line with Pareja-Eastway *et al.* (2013), argues that tailored and context-sensitive spatial policies pose a systematic breakdown of established neoliberal policies for the spatial agenda of cities and regions, and offer an alternative to the "one-size-fits-all" approach. In addition was the necessity of adapting to the specific characteristics of places as well as their needs; for "some people strategic planning needs a specific political and institutional context (Olesen and Richardson, 2012, p. 1690) for others "is sensitive to specific intellectual traditions" (Albrechts, 2015a, p. 512). Accordingly, tailor-made spatial planning strategies, geared towards specific potentials and focused on tackling specific bottlenecks that occur in places over time, would be able to render strategies more effective and equitable. The point I would like to highlight here is that strategic spatial planning must focus and capitalize on specific spatial contexts (cities, regions), as well as on place-specific qualities, assets and potentialities (see chapter 7 and Oliveira, 2015d), rather than select from a portfolio of spatial strategies that were successful in different environments/spatial contexts. Putting it simple, strategic spatial planning must focus on the specific characteristics of a specific place and not choose from an existing assortment of spatial strategies. In line with Asheim *et al.* (2011), and as I demonstrated in chapters 2 and 7, pursuing such a region-specific strategic spatial-planning approach is not to say that regional planning should rely exclusively on the resources of the region alone. Instead, knowledge-sharing platforms (tacit/experiential knowledge of local communities versus traditional scientific knowledge), policy-making synergies and spatial strategies may cross over regional and national boundaries (for example, in a Euroregion context such as northern Portugal and Galicia), as they do over sectoral boundaries - thus constructing an advantage through tailored and specific spatial planning strategies.

For Campbell and Marshall (2006, p. 240) spatial planning is "an activity which is concerned with making choices about good and bad, right and wrong, with and for others, in relation to particular places". Therefore, the outcome of this dialectic good/bad, right/wrong would be more effective in enabling change and envisioning better futures if it was tailored to the place's specific needs, assets and qualities. However, there is an important dimension that is often neglected in spatial planning literature or seldom addressed. Places are not homogeneous. They are complex and heterogeneous entities. Spatial planning, spatial planning strategies often impose costs and benefits unequally upon people. Hence, the question, who pays and who benefits from spatial planning interventions/strategies is also a critical one that deserves further research.

A tailor-made strategic spatial-planning strategy brings to the table the collective "interests that can be" and which may yet "become" (Metzger, 2012, p. 794), where citizens and disadvantaged people become equal partners in devising spatial strategies (Albrechts, 2015a). Mäntysalo *et al.* (2015), in line with Healey (2009), encourages an approach of strategic spatial planning as a realm that generates around itself a community of inquiry that nurtures the collective intelligence of those

within it. Collective and tailor-made spatial strategies must be the result of a joint effort to understand the present conditions and to envision different future possibilities, before starting to take decisions on which paths of spatial-developmental are most wanted and how to prepare the ground for them (Healey, 2009, p. 448). Albrechts (2015a) suggests co-production as a way to identify who defines concretely what spatial quality, equity, accountability and legitimacy really are (that is, identifying who is involved in the planning process and definition of strategies). Co-production as a basis for a renewal of the strategic spatial planning approach is further debated below in an attempt to also provide some reflections about who is co-producing with who/whom)?

8.1.3. Co-production of strategic spatial planning processes

In line with Albrechts (2015a, 2015b; 2013) and Kalliomäki (2015), co-production reframes the relation between government and citizens. In addition, it focuses on the equal partnership between actors involved in the strategic planning processes. Co-production acknowledges the value of multi-actor collaboration in strategic spatial planning; it opens consensus-based governance networks more widely, to cover diverse interests related to not only economic but also social and environmental issues, which accord well with the aims and objectives of place branding (see Oliveira 2015a, 2015b).

Arguably, one of the most challenging aspects of contemporary spatial planning is the dialectic relation between the manifestations that seek democratization/collective decision-making and the empowerment of citizens and communities. Co-production, which accounts for citizens' and institutional participation in the delivery of public services and political strategy, is not a new phenomenon, and can be viewed as making a solid contribution to a renewal of the strategic spatial planning approach.

Elinor Ostrom, American political economist and, later, a Nobel prize-winner, reflected in the 1970s (Time Banks, 2011, cited in Albrechts, 2013) that public goods such as "education, health, or infrastructure services such as water and sewage treatment were very often assigned to government agencies to produce, while citizens were given the passive role of consumers and clients" (2013, p. 48). Ostrom (1996) defines co-production as "the process through which inputs used to produce a good or service is contributed by individuals who are not in the same organization" (1996, p. 1073). Ostrom goes on to argue that citizens must be active actors in decision-making processes over public goods and services, and "she came to the conclusion that coproduction was often the missing ingredient that only citizens could provide" (Albrechts, 2013, p. 48).

Whitaker (1980), cited in Albrechts (2013), argues that co-production with citizens and grassroots organizations is needed for more effective management of some initiatives/issues/projects, but also for the dynamic that encourages transformative practices. Albrechts (2013), in line with Mitlin (2008), reinforces this argument and argues that co-production provides a response to real needs because it prepares citizens and organizations/institutions for a more substantive engagement with political and decision-making systems. Following several definitions and perspectives on co-production in decision-making, spatial-planning processes and political strategies, Table 8.1. provides a brief summary of the approaches used by authors, in chronological order.

Table 8.1. Summary of definitions and perspectives on co-production*

Whitaker (1980)	"Coproduction implies the possibility that citizens might influence the execution of public policies as well as its formulation and actors interact to adjust each other's expectations and actions" (p. 242). In the vein of Whitaker's arguments, citizens are regarded as decision makers. In addition, citizens are also viewed as "benchmarks against which to assess the wisdom of alternatives, but they do not determine behavior; neither do frames prescribe fixed outcomes" (p. 242). **Whitaker's main argument**: Citizens are decision makers capable of influencing public policies.
Ostrom (1996)	"Coproduction implies that citizens can play an active role in producing public goods and services of consequence to them. Coproduction is one way that synergy between what a government does and what citizens do can occur" (p. 1079). Ostrom delivers a strong statement in saying that "no government can be efficient and equitable without considerable input from citizens" (p. 1083). **Ostrom's main argument**: Citizens impact the efficiency of government positively.
Sandercock (1998)	Co-production is focused on developing socio-spatial imaginations and also on the construction of an inclusive governance system. In this way, it "includes not only the views of the most articulate or powerful, but also the views of those who have been systematically excluded by structural inequalities of class, gender and religion" (p. 65). **Sandercock's main argument**: Co-production is an integrative process.
Joshi and Moore (2004)	"Institutionalize coproduction is the provision of public services (broadly defined to include regulation) through regular, long-term relations between state agencies and organised groups of citizens, who both make substantial resource contributions" (p. 40). **Joshi and Moore's main argument**: Provision of public services occurs through institutions and citizens.
Boyle and Harris (2009)	"Coproduction means delivering public services in an equal and reciprocal relationship between professionals, people using services, their families and their neighbours. Where activities are co-produced in this way, both services and neighbourhoods become far more effective agents of change" (p. 11). The advantage of co-production is that it

	acknowledges and rewards both local knowledge and experience, "while continuing to value professional expertise" (p. 15). **Boyle and Harris's main argument**: Co-production values local and expert knowledge simultaneously.
Mitlin (2008)	Co-production is "a political process that citizens engage with to secure changes in their relations with government and state agencies in addition to improvement of basic services" (p. 352) - that is, joint/co-production of public services between citizens and the government. An important conceptual differentiation is also provided by Mitlin (2008), who suggests that co-production is different from standard civic participation or partnership arrangements. In addition, co-production is apparently more effective than lobbying or protesting in terms of enabling change or gaining benefits. The implementation of co-production in spatial decision-making may be smooth and cooperative. **Mitlin's main argument**: Co-production has more impact in enabling structural change than other forms of civic demonstration.

Source: Own elaboration based on cited references and Albrechts (2013). *co-production appears in this chapter and in thesis as "co-production". However, the reader will also find "coproduction" but only when is part of a citation.

The sum of the definitions above suggests that co-production provides a platform for wider civic and institutional engagement and participation in policy- and decision-making. In addition, it prepares citizens and organizations to challenge, resist and comply with state government (Albrechts, 2013, in line with Roy, 2010). The above-mentioned definitions, however, do not state clearly the interrelations between co-production and spatial planning. Therefore, it is important to debate here how co-production can contribute to a renewal of the strategic spatial planning approach, and how it can contribute to the rethinking of place branding as a more geospatial phenomenon. I also acknowledge that the work on - local production system (see for example Rodríguez-Pose, 2001) as well as the work on - geographically concentrated production systems (see for example Storper and Scott, 1988) could be useful to deepen the understanding on the conceptual links between co-production, place branding and strategic spatial planning. Table 8.2. attempts to summarize the conceptual links between co-production and strategic spatial planning. Those current and potential links are particularly useful for the conclusions of this thesis.

Table 8.2. Summarizing co-production in strategic spatial planning.

Albrechts (2013)	Albrechts argues that it seems worthwhile exploring the added value of co-production - as a strategy to secure political influence and to access resources and services - as a central concept in the theory and practices of strategic spatial planning. In addition, co-production strategies can be understood as a response to some of the paradoxes of democratic will and practices. Albrechts (2013) advocates that a co-productive perspective in strategic planning would reframe the state-citizen relationship by highlighting their skills and knowledge to deliver services, policies, plans or projects.
	Albrechts's main argument: Co-production will bring citizens close to the strategic spatial planning process. Citizens will actively engage with the development of spatial strategies.
Albrechts (2015a)	Albrechts (2015a), in line with Purcell (2009), suggests that "a strategic spatial planning process based on coproduction acknowledges that some forms of strategic spatial planning tend in the long term to reinforce the status quo because it seeks to resolve conflict, eliminate exclusion, and neutralize power relations rather than embracing them as the very terrain of social mobilization" (p. 515). Following Friedmann (2005), Albrechts (2015a) argues that co-production ought to be conceived as a collective endeavour. In this collective action, citizens are an integral part of the action-project instead of being passive objects in a combination of a "needs-based and a rights-based approach" (p. 515). In line with Healey (2006, p. 541), Albrechts (2015a) highlights what I have exhorted in chapters 5 and 7 of this Ph.D. thesis - that is, the value of local and scientific knowledge in spatial strategy-making. Local and expert/scientific knowledge or expertise can be combined on an "equal base, shared strategic conviction can grow, and conflicts are reframed in a less antagonistic manner" (p. 515). By replicating Brand and Gaffikin's (2007) arguments, Albrechts (2015a) convincingly states that the application of "coproduction in a strategic planning process offers alternatives, stimulates critical reflection, is noncoercive, and is capable of reflecting particular experiences with more universal principles" (p. 516) and is relevant to today's issues. These universal values and day-to-day issues are equity, social justice, sustainable development and spatial quality.
	Albrechts's main argument: Co-production strengthens the socio-spatial character of the strategic spatial planning process.

Kalliomäki (2015)	Kalliomäki (2015) discusses the post-political spatial planning developments "in light of the concepts of coproduction and trading zones with the attempt to reframe new state-led strategic planning practices as arenas for multi-level governance and coordination of the state space" (p. 114). A renewal of the strategic spatial planning approach as a co-productive trading zone situated "between state-led and place-based interests offers a useful framework for policymaking as it sheds light on the need for political trading of narrow planning objectives coproductively by crossing horizontal and vertical boundaries and by acknowledging, and potentially learning from, the different ways of thinking about the ultimate planning goal" (p. 116). **Kalliomäki's main argument**: Planning objectives will be produced in collaboration between citizens, institutions and governments.

Source: Own elaboration based on cited references. *co-production appears in this chapter and in thesis as "co-production". However, the reader will also find "coproduction" but only when is part of a citation.

An example of co-production in spatial planning and spatial plan making might be useful, here, to illustrate the theoretical links described in Table 8.2. Albrechts (2013), following Milroy (1992), gives the example of the 1991 Toronto Development Plan (Figure 8.3.). Toronto's urban-region plan was developed via the co-production model, which means that citizens (as well as politicians) accepted that their involvement was legitimate. Citizens' voices were heard during the spatial planning process – but in a more dynamic, open and friendly way that simple "participation".
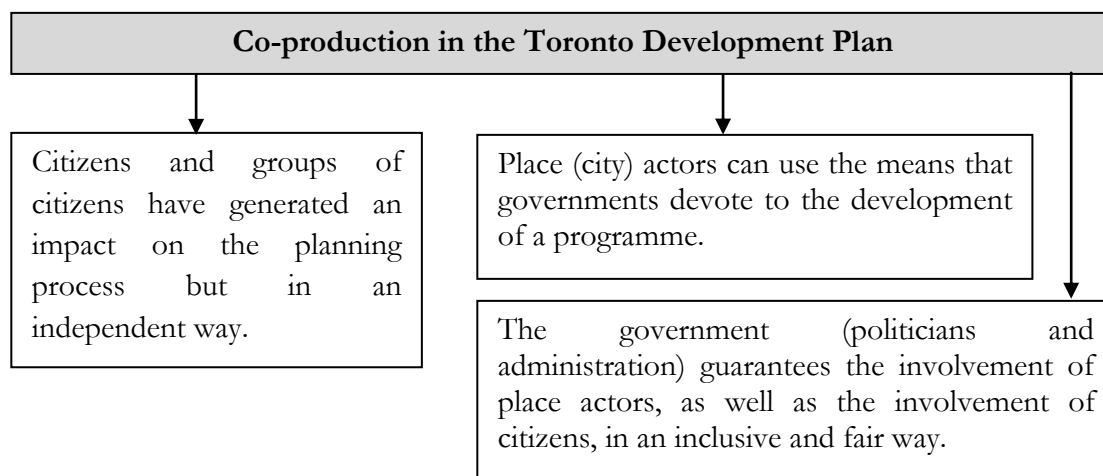

Figure 8.3. An example of co-production in spatial planning.
Source: own elaboration based on Albrechts (2013).

Spatial planners have been looking for ways of involving/engaging with place actors and citizens for generations. However, I acknowledge that involving citizens often proves to be almost impossible and is really never inclusive. In this regarding, some scholars have been exploring - co-production, as stated above. Co-production, conceived as a political strategy, allows a city or region to strengthen its local organizational base of citizens and "increase their capacity to negotiate successfully with the state" (see Mitlin, 2008, p. 340). Summarizing Albrechts's arguments, co-production is an engine to enable change, and provides an alternative approach to civic and institutional participation. By aligning the definitions of co-production presented in Tables 8.1. and 8.2., co-production brings different voices together, empowers citizens and legitimizes political and planning decisions. It thus avoids shaping spatial futures for cities and regions that are not in line with the hopes and needs of citizens and local organizations - co-production is "instrumental in the building of strong, resilient, and mutually supportive communities that could assure its members that their needs would be met" (Albrechts, 2015a, p. 520).

The present subsection complements and concludes the argument of this thesis on civic participation in strategic spatial planning and place branding. The section develops further the concept of co-production, superficially elaborated in chapter 5. Co-production contributes to the renewal of strategic spatial planning, as it requests the full mobilization of citizens to engage in counterhegemonic struggles to establish alternative policies and to play a central role in decision-making by insisting that those alternative policies (alternative to governmental-non-participatory policies) are also possible (see Lambert-Pennington *et al.* 2011; Purcell, 2009, p. 151–152; Saija, 2011). Alternatively, in Monno's (2010) words, working with the impossible as emancipatory imagination. Albrechts (2015a), in line with Purcell (2009), argues that co-production can indeed contribute to a revival of the strategic spatial planning approach because it counters hegemonic politics by challenging neoliberalization, in which some groups are systematically advantaged by decision-making. Kalliomäki (2015) complements this thought by underlining that the "separate planning theoretical discussions on coproduction, trading zones and post-political planning need to be intertwined in order to increase understanding about the democracy deficit in strategic spatial planning and the potential ways to overcome this deficit" (p. 116). However, one can also argue that this "democracy deficit" (Kalliomäki, 2015, p. 116) is almost inevitable in a representative democracy and it also manifest in other aspects of government not just in strategic spatial planning. Kalliomäki (2015) suggests that reframing of strategic spatial planning as a co-productive trading zone between state-led and place-based interests offers a useful framework for policy and decision making. This, because it "sheds light on the need for political trading of narrow planning objectives co-productively by crossing horizontal and vertical boundaries and by acknowledging, and potentially learning from, the different ways of thinking about the ultimate planning goal" (p. 116). The next subsection will explore how this renewal in strategic spatial planning through tailor-made and more context-sensitive strategies and co-production can reinforce place branding as an instrument in strategic planning.

8.2. Rethinking place branding through strategic spatial planning, towards more effective, integrative, socially responsible and strategic place-branding initiatives

A number of unresolved issues regarding place branding, particularly branding regions, remain. This section aims to specifically highlight and critically reflect upon those unresolved issues. The main goal is to contribute to the theoretical refinement of place branding and to assert its practices, specifically within regions (including cross-border regions).

Following the theoretical framework of this study presented and discussed in chapter 5, as well as the empirical insights deriving from the case study on northern Portugal, this section revisits the theory to debate six main requirements that the place-branding field must meet. These requirements must be critically discussed in the light of the primary strand of reasoning, thus contributing to the theoretical refinement of the main research question stated previously:

> How and why might (and, eventually, should) place branding be taken as an instrument in the strategic spatial planning approach (thus contributing to the improvement of the socio-spatial and spatial-economic conditions), reshaping responses to contemporary challenges faced by places and shape clearly envisioned, agreed, socially responsible and realistic futures for places?

This rethinking of place branding is in line with Kavaratzis *et al.* (2015), Ashworth *et al.* (2015) and Warnaby *et al.* (2015), as well as in line with the main research objective of this Ph.D. thesis, as previously stated:

> To contribute to the advancement and maturation of the place-branding field, by: taking it to be an instrument within the strategic spatial planning approach, thus lending a more strategic approach and geographical/spatial consciousness to the process of place branding; by discussing its relevance and effectiveness in supporting economic and socio-spatial realignment; by contributing to reimagining processes and structural change through civic participation and the shaping of clearly envisioned, agreed, socially responsible and realistic futures, independently of the spatial scale of application (country, neighbourhood, districts, city, region, across administrative border territories), as well as independently of the nature of the branding process, if it is a novel one or an exercise in rebranding.

Warnaby *et al.* (2015) proposed a rethinking of place branding "in terms of its origins, theoretical underpinnings, conceptual development, practical applications and expected outcomes" (p. 241). Andersson (2015), following various publications by Pike (2009; 2011a; 2013) and Ashworth *et al.* (2015), recently investigated the need for more spatially aware readings in place branding. As Pike (2011a) argued, "more spatially aware readings of brands and branding offer a means of lifting their mystical veils to illuminate and explain their geographical associations and connotations" (p. 326). Andersson (2015) goes on to advocate that "place branding is affected by the spatial processes of the place where it is implemented and that both territorial and relational aspects of these processes must

be taken into consideration to conceptually understand place branding" (p. 40). Table 8.3. summarizes those six needs and the scholars who have inspired my thinking.

Table 8.3. Rethinking place branding (PB) through strategic spatial planning (SPP) towards a more effective, integrative, socially responsible and strategic place-branding initiatives

Remaining issue	The six main needs	Inspired by:
One-size-fits-all approach and the uniformity resulting from the repeated application of the same place-branding initiatives.	i) The need to align place branding with **place-specific qualities** through tailor-made and context sensitive initiatives.	**SPP-oriented literature** Albrechts and Balducci (2013); Albrechts (2015a); Healey *et al.* (1999); Healey (2007a, 2007b, 2009); Asheim *et al.* (2011); Pareja-Eastway *et al.* (2013).
		PB-oriented literature Kavaratzis *et al.* (2015); Zavattaro *et al.,* (2015).
Excessive concentration on inter-place competition as the ultimate goal of place branding.	ii) The need to align place branding with **spatial-development** plans and strategic spatial-planning goals of a place, thus improving spatial conditions.	**SPP-oriented literature** Balducci *et al.* (2011); Cerreta *et al.* (2010); Hillier and Healey (2010).
		PB-oriented literature Boisen *et al.* (2011); Kalandides (2011a; 2011b); Warnaby and Medway, (2013).
Excessive reliance on promotional tactics and aesthetics (logos and taglines.) Lack of strategy.	iii) The need for **strategic thinking** in place branding, thus enabling **structural change** in places.	**SPP-oriented literature** Habermas (1993); Cerreta *et al.* (2010); Albrechts (2013).
		PB-oriented literature Ashworth *et al.* (2015); Porter (2013); Ashworth and Kavaratzis, (2010).
Place branding often works to conceal power struggles and to impose elite-led interests and directions, while suppressing opposing voices or neglecting citizens' needs and hopes.	iv) The need for **co-production in** place branding, thus co-producing a collective place branding initiative in a collective spatial logic.	**SPP-oriented literature** Albrechts (2015a); Albrechts (2013); Kalliomäki (2015).
		PB-oriented literature Ashworth *et al.* (2015); Eshuis *et al.* (2014); Stubbs and Warnaby (2015).

Lack of vision in the place-branding process. Disparities between image-building and day-to-day reality.	v) The need to align place branding with the **envisioning process** of devising desirable futures, thus aligning the expectations people hold in their minds with the actual reality of the place in the present, and the aspirational future.	**SPP-oriented literature** Healey (2006), Balducci *et al.* (2011), Albrechts and Balducci, (2013), Albrechts (2015a).
		PB-oriented literature Ashworth *et al.* (2015); Oliveira (2015a, 2015b).
Communities and other place actors often do not see their values or identities represented in the place-branding initiative.	vi) The need to consider place branding as a possible route to reinvigorate **spatial identities** and a **sense of place**.	**SPP-oriented literature** Amin and Thrift (1994); Harvey, (1996); Healey (2009); Zimmerbauer (2011).
		PB literature Campelo (2015); Ashworth and Kavaratzis, (2010); Clifton (2011); Van Assche and Lo (2011); Kalandides, (2011a; 2011b); Hankinson (2010).

Source: own elaboration based on the cited references and in line with Oliveira (2015a, 2015b, 2015c, 2015d)

Following the logic implemented in the subsection above (8.2.), I will further detail each point mentioned in Table 8.3. Later, I will return to the theoretical framework debated in chapter 5.

i) The need to align place branding with place-specific qualities through tailor-made and context sensitive initiatives

In the light of inspiring work by Healey *et al.* (1999), Healey (2007a, 2007b, 2009) and Hillier and Healey (2010), I have introduced the first sector/vector of the theoretical framework - a focus on regional qualities. Here, I argue for the need to align place branding with place-specific qualities through tailor-made and context-sensitive initiatives (Oliveira, 2014d; Pareja-Eastway *et al.*, 2013). In line with the thoughts I have been shaping over the past four years regarding place branding, I advocate the need for places and place authorities to decide against taking a one-size-fits-all approach. My thoughts have also been influenced by the economic geography literature (see chapter 7 and Oliveira, 2015d). For instance, the work developed by Asheim, Boschma and Cooke on constructing a regional advantage is of relevance to the refinement of the place-branding literature, in my view. Asheim *et al.* (2011) argue that the copying of best practices, as identified by benchmarking studies, is popular amongst governments and policymakers but has proved a failure because of place-specific and knowledge asymmetries. These failures could be "illustrated by regional policies aimed at creating new growth sectors or imitating successful models like Silicon Valley in California" (Asheim *et al.*, 2011, p. 894). This "copycat behaviour", in the words of Hospers (2004, p. 274), can be witnessed in Europe, "where many authorities are dazzled by Silicon high-tech dreams and hope to

copy the alleged success of Silicon Valley. Kavaratzis (2010) complements Hospers' (2004) rationale by arguing that "it is imperative to develop branding tools that are place-specific and not a simple extension of well-known tools that are used for purposes that have little resemblance to place development goals" (p. 37).

Increasingly inspired by this high-tech Californian area, regions are presenting themselves as being "Silicon' or 'Valleys' - without emphazising their own uniqueness" (Hospers, 2004, p. 274). Therefore, in the vein of Hospers (2004), Tödtling and Trippl (2005), Asheim *et al.* (2011) stress that there is widespread awareness that 'one-size-fits-all' spatial-policy measures and frameworks do not work because, among other reasons, they: i) do not emphasize spatial uniqueness; 2) are not embedded in their spatial settings and 3) are not adapted to the place-specific qualities. The aim to become 'silicon valley somewhere' or to implement a place-branding strategy in line with well-known cases such as 'I Love New York' or 'I amsterdam' remains one of the unresolved issues in place-branding initiatives. Stimulated by place-based approaches in spatial policy (for example, Kinnear *et al.*, 2013) I proposed here (complementing and concluding what I have argued in chapter 1 and 2) that tailor-made and context-sensitive initiatives would greatly contribute to make place-branding initiatives become effective, integrative and socially responsible.

Aligning place branding with place-specific qualities through tailor-made initiatives adapted to the spatial context would strengthen local and regional institutions that are able to assess and develop local economic assets (Kinner *et al.*, 2013) in the long term. In line with Asheim *et al.* (2011), tailor-made initiatives and processes would allow capitalization on place-specific assets and the revealing of place-potentials and expertise (Oliveira, 2015d). Tailor-made place-branding initiatives, as suggested by Pareja-Eastway *et al.* (2013), focus on local realities, assets and both tangible and intangible elements - thus bringing to the branding process uniqueness and the distinctive elements of a place, rather than 'importing' measures, approaches or formulae. Furthermore, context-sensitive initiatives, as opposed to a one-size-fits-all strategy, are required to achieve effective socially and economically sustainable place branding, independently of the scale of application.

ii) The need to align place branding with spatial-development plans and strategic spatial-planning goals of a place, thus improving spatial conditions

In line with Boisen *et al.* (2011), Kavaratzis *et al.* (2015), Oliveira (2015a, b, c, d) and the main findings of Chapters 2, 3 and 5, I argue for the need to align place branding with the spatial development of regions, in an approach to the branding process of places that goes far beyond territorial competition. Pasquinelli (2013) defines territorial competition "as the main assumption of place branding" (p. 1) but argues that competition is not an exhaustive approach to understanding place branding as a part of local and regional development strategies. Indeed, place brands are useful tools that countries, cross-border regions, regions, cities and districts use as they compete with each other for limited, hypermobile financial and human resources (Ashworth *et al.*, 2015). Pasquinelli (2013), however, argues that places can "undertake inter-territorial cooperation in order to enhance their competitiveness". Ashworth *et al.* (2015) highlights the fact that place brands and place branding could provide solutions to practical/functional place-related problems, while Rainisto (2003) argues that place marketing and place branding have become prominent features in the economic

development strategy of places and as tools for place development. In line with Kotler *et al.*, (2002), "place development means to develop for a place a systematic and long-term marketing strategy directed towards nurturing and developing the natural and potential attributes of an area or region" (p. 57).

Place branding aligned with and ultimately integrated into strategic spatial planning would provide the context in which various functional, social and economic constraints or time-sensitive issues can be solved. An example might be useful, here. One of the recurrent functional problems, registered in northern Portugal, is the problem of how to attract investment for a development/regeneration project defined in a spatial-development plan for a place, such as a city or region. Place branding could also contribute by shedding light on how to capitalize fully on a tourist resource in the area, or how to increase the usage or yield of a recently redeveloped site. Often, several industrial sites located in northern Portugal have been planned, built and even promoted. Some of them, however, are still lacking in activity. Place branding, if aligned with such spatially planned interventions, could support the communication between local authorities and potential investors. In addition, place branding could also be a vehicle of a reimagining process that could reposition a certain industrial site and, as a consequence, an entire place - it could achieve strategic planning goals, for instance, the goal of becoming a high-tech industrial region or technical textiles-oriented industry park.

According to Ashworth *et al.* (2015), a place brand is assumed to lend support in securing a desired position within the global flows of people and capital. In this regard, and in line with Kavaratzis (2010), it is vitally important to understand place branding as an eclectic and strategic choice for spatial development and not just a set of promotional tools. Kavaratzis has made two relevant arguments that, in my view, align place branding and strategic spatial-planning goals. Kavaratzis (2008) argues that place branding is not about informing the world that a place is good or excellent; instead, it is more about making it a good place (improving the spatial conditions) and letting the world know that the place's authorities are trying to improve it and solve spatial constraints. In addition, Kavaratzis (2008) argues that place branding does help to improve a place's image *per se* but also that this improvement is always based on broad interventions - which, in line with Oliveira (2015a), could be linked to strategic spatial planning. Kavaratzis (2010) goes on to argue that the essence of place branding lies within strategic thinking, which links to the third need debated here: the vital question of whether place branding can provide a useful basis for such strategic thinking when it comes to spatial development (economic, social, cultural) and achieve strategic spatial-planning goals. The next subsection highlights the need for strategic thinking in place branding.

iii) The need for strategic thinking in place branding, thus enabling structural change in places

As I have argued before, Kavaratzis (2010) emphasizes the fact that the essence of place branding lies in strategic thinking. Braun (2008), in a study dedicated to city marketing, underlines that "city marketing is therefore a long-term strategic commitment" (p. 67). This means that place branding could be employed to find solutions for spatial problems in the long-term, rather than be accepted as

a solution in and of itself in the short-term. Furthermore, place-branding initiatives must last longer than the term in office of one particular government and, as I have been arguing throughout this thesis, integrated as an instrument of strategic spatial planning so that they can help to enable structural change - "if branding altogether is not merely about the intentional communication of a favourable image but is a strategic response to challenges in the environment, then place branding is useful" (Kavaratzis, 2010, p. 39).

Recently, Ashworth *et al.* (2015) stated that place branding and place brands provide strategic guidance for place development that links well with strategic spatial planning and the envisioning process that is intrinsic to it. In line with Malecki (2004) and Paul (2004), Andersson (2015) argues that territorial competition, as well as the increase of co-dependency of other places, is suggested in order to create a need for new forms of strategic planning, of which place branding is considered to offer guidance and management principles. As has been argued before, the 'strategic' in strategic spatial planning implies that "some decisions and actions are considered more important than others and that much of the process lies in making the tough decisions about what is most important for the purpose of producing fair, structural responses to problems, challenges, aspirations, and diversity" (Albrechts, 2004, pp. 751–752). Strategic thinking in place branding and linked with strategic spatial planning would bring consistency to the branding process and will align it with a wider vision for a place. Boisen *et al.* (2011) assert that "when spatial policies are followed by a strategic vision and tactical actions to promote specific goals, the institutions formulating and pursuing these policies can exercise significant power in guiding the future development of the place in question" (pp. 6–7). In this regard, place branding used as a strategic spatial-planning instrument will not only support the communication of eventually secured structural changes in a place's spatial structure but will also do it by pursuing different interventions altogether.

Strategic thinking in place branding would avoid constant changes in place brands by maintaining consistency, while always remaining open to potential improvements and existing in symbiosis with wider spatial strategies, visions of and desired futures for a place. For this to happen, it is necessary to embrace a participative approach to the process of branding places (Oliveira, 2015a, 2015b). However, recent scholarship on strategic spatial planning, mainly Albrechts (2015 a, 2015b) as I have underlined above, makes claims for an 'innovative approach' to civic and organizational participation - co-production - which I will focus on further as the fourth necessity of rethinking place branding in strategic spatial planning, thus constructing a collective place-branding initiative in terms of a collective spatial logic.

iv) The need for co-production in place branding, thus co-producing a collective place branding initiative in a collective spatial logic

Recently, Kavaratzis and Kalandides (2015) proposed a rethinking of place brands and place branding through a more interactive formation of place brands and a more participatory mode of place branding. Their view on participatory place branding is supported by developments of the "the concept of brand co-creation as this has been developed within general branding and leads to a more participatory approach" (Kavaratzis and Kalandides, 2015, p. 1369). I have debated co-creation in place branding in chapter 4. In this subsection, I draw into the discussion about place branding the

concept of co-production that has been explored within the strategic spatial-planning literature (see Tables 8.1. and 8.2., above). I argue here for the need for co-production in place branding in order to co-produce a collective place-branding initiative within a collective spatial logic - a process in which participatory place branding and the co-creation of place brands are both intrinsic to the concept of co-production.

Albrechts (2015a, 2015b) argues that co-production is a cornerstone for more radical strategic spatial planning, which means strategic spatial planning developed through the participation of citizens and myriad place actors. According to Albrechts (2013), "coproduction combines the provision of public goods/services needed with the building of a strong, resilient and mutually supportive community that could assure its members their needs would be met" (p. 46). In my view, this is a key insight that must be translated into place-branding theory and practice, and that this translation could be achieved if place branding is used as an instrument in wider spatial-planning strategies. This involves changing the behaviour of practitioners and place managers dealing with place branding, as it requires a higher degree of involvement of not only parties with a stake in a certain place but also the citizens and communities more widely, in order to cover diverse interests related to social and environmental as well as economic issues. Acknowledging the fact that bringing all place actors together is a tough task, Kalliomäki (2015), in the vein of Albrechts (2013), underlines the fact that co-production offers an alternative approach to the relation between governments and citizens, and "focuses on the equal partnership between actors involved in the strategic planning processes" (Kalliomäki, 2015, p. 114). Place brands also provide a foundation for cooperation between multiple place actors, organizations and communities in general.

Place branding researchers have been paying particular attention to civic and institutional participation in place branding as an alternative approach. The recurring approach understands place branding as the development of place promotional initiatives and identity claims, which, according to Bennett and Savani (2003), are clearly top-down rather than bottom-up and exclusive rather than participatory (see, for example, Braun, Kavaratzis and Zenker 2013; Houghton and Stevens, 2011). For example, Warnaby *et al.* (2015) emphasizes that one of the primary aims of place branding is to identify common ideas and directions for the future of the community, and to produce collectively generated place stories and visions. This is an approach that focuses on internal audiences, assuming that the aim of place branding is to reinforce peoples' identification with the place and to increase place-attachment. Eshuis *et al.* (2014) argue that "citizen involvement in place branding can be used to enhance the quality of the brand and include citizens' emotions in governance processes" (p. 151). Kavaratzis (2012) convincingly debates the need to rethink the role of stakeholders, moving towards a more participation- and involvement-orientated mode of place branding. Kavaratzis (2012) points out some reasons that justify a higher degree of stakeholders' involvement in place branding. One of the reasons is that place branding is a public management activity, and such activities need to have some more realistic support from certain elements of the public realm for various social and political reasons. In addition, place branding is a political process connected to the discussion of "power struggles" (Kavaratzis, 2012). In the same line of thought, Ashworth *et al.* (2015) underline the fact that place branding is undertaken as a struggle for political, financial and social power. Ashworth *et al.* (2015) go on to highlight that it "is most commonly assumed that place branding works to conceal

such power struggles and to impose elite-led interests and directions while suppressing opposing voices" (p. 6). Kerr and Oliver (2015) make clear the fact that co-production of place identity refers to the residents being simultaneously producers and consumers of place identity. In addition, they advocate the view that place identity is the result of continuous meaning-making processes between citizens and the place in which they live.

By using place branding as an instrument in strategic spatial planning and emphasizing the concept of co-production, such power struggles are likely to be managed in a more fair and equitable way. In addition, co-production in place branding sounds at first like an effective step towards a more participation-oriented practice of branding places that Kavaratzis (2012) and Kavaratzis and Kalandides (2015) have been calling for. Kavaratzis (2012) argues that "most of place branding practice actually testifies that these struggles are not only evident as results of power inequalities and institutional agendas but also, most commonly, solved to the interest of the most powerful group" (p. 13). In addition, with co-production, a place's actors and citizens interact and adjust each other's expectations and actions in terms of the public's decisions (Whitaker, 1980).

As I have argued, strategic spatial planning focuses on day-to-day issues (Albrechts, 2010a, 2010b) and co-production responds to the real needs of citizens and organizations by preparing them for a more substantive engagement with the political and planning systems (Albrechts, 2013; Mitlin, 2008). I acknowledge that one can be doubtful about the difference between participatory place branding and the introduction of co-production place-branding initiatives. Albrechts (2015a) argues that the one-size-fits-all concept of citizens' participation does not seem to provide the equal and reciprocal relationship between political (governments'), economic and social (citizens') powers that is so desired. Co-production used in policy making, strategic spatial planning and (as argued here) place branding, would contribute to resolving or at least simplifying conflicts, eliminating exclusion and neutralizing power relations, rather than embracing them as the very terrain of social mobilization (see Purcell, 2009). In line with Ostrom (1990), Roy (2010), Mitlin (2008) and Albrechts (2013), co-production is conceived as a collective effort, as place branding should be, with citizens as a part of the action rather than its object (Friedmann, 2005); it is also a combination of a needs-based and a rights-based approach towards a collective spatial logic "where value systems can be articulated, local and scientific knowledge can be combined on an equal basis, shared strategic conviction can grow, and conflicts are reframed in a less antagonistic manner" (Albrechts, 2015, p. 515, in line with Healey, 2006).

Co-production in a place-branding process integrated within wider spatial-planning strategies offers an alternative approach to civic and institutional participation. It allows us to pay more attention to the principles of equity and social justice, as well as to focus on sustainable development and spatial-quality issues. Co-production could strengthen the socio-spatial dimension of the place-branding process within a strategic spatial-planning one. It also blurs the boundary between producers and consumers, emphasizes repeated informal interactions (Boyle and Harris, 2009) and derives from a strong ethical sense (see Moulaert, 2011). The uniqueness of co-production, a fact that defends the use of co-production in place branding, is that citizens are being asked to construct their own governance institutions (see Healey, 1997b) and not only to cooperate. By undertaking place branding as an instrument of strategic spatial planning, citizens will have the opportunity to

envision a different future for their place, for instance a region, as well as to articulate their interests in an organized way towards the satisfaction of real needs.

Co-production would greatly reinforce the arguments made throughout this thesis and debated specifically in chapter 5: that a place brand only makes sense when it is created by everybody, when everybody can envision aspirational and better futures. Apart from the importance of strategic spatial planning for this discussion, as highly debated in this thesis, integrated spatial planning (see for example Vigar, 2009) could also be fruitful in the exploration of the possible links between spatial planning, place branding and co-production. This statement bridges the gap between arguments for these six needs to the next one I discuss: on the need to align place branding with the process of envisioning desirable (better) futures.

v) The need to align place branding with the envisioning process of devising desirable futures, thus aligning the expectations people hold in their minds with the actual reality of the place in the present, and the aspirational future

As Ashworth *et al.* (2015) convincingly state, place branding is potentially to be used as "an instrument for envisioning an aspirational 'imagined future'" (p. 4) - which would allow the imagining and idealizing of desirable futures (or a totally different direction) for the spatial condition of a place (for example, economic, social, cultural and environmental). Following this line of reasoning, place branding is an instrument to create visions about the future, and place brands are thought to provide both a vision for the place's future and a direction for possible measures that will help to attain this vision. The aim of envisioning is to broaden the scope of the possible or, in the words of Žižek, cited in Albrechts (2013, p. 54), envisioning is the "art of the impossible" (Žižek, 1999, p. 199 cited in Albrechts, 2013). It provides a frame for decisions in order to view a, hopefully, better future; to encourage hopes, wills and dreams; to appeal to values and to challenge existing knowledge and practices.

According to Albrechts (2010a), envisioning is the process by which citizens or groups of citizens develop visions of future states for themselves, their organizations and their place (a city or region). Envisioning enables citizens to make decisions in terms of a desired alternative future for their own place, as well as to understand and accept opportunities for change (including structural change). Albrechts (2010a) argues that envisioning assumes that cities or regions understand that the future does not have a linear relationship with the past; it is, instead, discontinuous with the past and the present. In strategic spatial planning, "envisioning provides direction without destination, movement without prediction" (Albrechts, 2013, p. 55); by taking place branding as an instrument in strategic spatial planning, imagining visions for the future would sustain a place brand, thus contributing to its effectiveness and impact. Combining the need to align place branding with the envisioning process of desirable better futures with co-production, regional actors would "assess together and co-construct spaces of possibilities or impossibilities" (Forester, 2010b, p. 172). In this manner, place actors would imagine futures/engage in envisioning or create visions about the future for themselves, the organizations they represent, their neighbourhood, their city or their region — visions that are appropriately clear and powerful enough to arouse and sustain the actions necessary for (at least parts of) these visions to become a reality (Goodstein *et al.*, 1993).

With envisioning included in place branding, it is possible to focus on what ought to open doors for the integration of multiple perspectives emerging from the participatory and co-production processes - it includes not only the views of the most articulate or powerful, but also the views of those who have been systematically excluded by the structural inequalities of class, gender and religion (Sandercock, 1998). In line with Roy (2010) and Grosz (1999), envisioning must be capable of envisioning the transformative by questioning different types of knowledge (local, expert and statistical). As envisioning is a collective process (Albrechts, 2010a, 2010b) that requires the involvement of all relevant actors (Innes, 1996), so do strategic spatial planning and place branding. Therefore, envisioning must be as central to the process of place branding as it is to that of strategic spatial planning (Albrechts, 2010a, 2010b). Envisioning, in my view, reinforces the commitment of citizens and a wide range of regional actors, including policy and decision makers, to the realization of the created (envisioned) vision of the future. These visions must be shared and provide a sense of direction (a direction in which to go) and, simultaneously, a sense of engagement in something worth engaging in (Goodstein *et al.*, 1993).

According to Albrechts (2010a, 2010b), envisioning reveals how things can be different and better than they were in the past, how citizens can be innovative in their city and how it is possible to unlock creativity in a place's improvement. In addition, some other questions could also arise: how can regional actors and citizens be persuaded to cooperate and endorse the same vision, spatial strategies and place brand? How to convince publics that the way forward is to imagine alternative futures in order to master structural change? Active participation in place branding, as in strategic spatial planning, may generate trust, as participants in the process are likely to understand why certain visions and decisions for the future are better and suit their needs.

As argued above, despite several calls for a more participatory approach to place branding, communities and other place actors often do not see their values and identities represented in place-branding initiatives. Thus, I also argue here for the need to consider place branding as a possible means of reinvigorating spatial identities and a sense of place, a view inspired mainly by Campelo (2015) and Kerr and Oliver (2015). Campelo (2015) also calls for a distinct form of place branding based on the need to include the local community, its habitus and its sense of place. The next subsection will debate this.

vi) The need to consider place branding as a possible route to reinvigorate spatial identities and a sense of place

Ashworth *et al.* (2015), in their search for possible answers to the question 'what builds place brands?', suggest that "place brands consist of associations with place-making elements" and that the essence of place branding lies "in understanding, enhancing and even helping to shape 'sense of place' and how this changes over time" (p. 5). Campelo (2015) deepens this idea and argues that time, ancestry, landscape and community create a sense of place and are fundamental for the construction of spatial identities and the place brand. In line with the previous chapters, Campelo (2015) also argues in favour of a distinct form of place branding based on the need to include the local community, its habitus and its sense of place.

The emphasis of this need to think place branding as a possible means of reinvigorating spatial identities and a sense of place is twofold. First, it aims to emphasize the collective construction of place brands. Secondly, it aims to emphasize the fact that place branding involves a wide range of processes rather than exclusively promotional activities. These points highlight the fact that place branding and the development and management of place brands must be inclusive and representative of all segments of a community (Campelo, 2015). As stressed by Campelo (2015), a sense of place must take into account the *genius loci* as a shared sense of the spirit of a place. In line with Low and Altman (1992), Campelo (2015) emphasizes that "this shared atmosphere includes place attachment, social context, community ties, and ancestral connections" (2015, p. 52). On the one hand, understanding the sense of place is important in attempting to develop brands for places, as stressed by Campelo (2015). On the other hand, Campelo (2015) asserts that "the development of brands for places is complex because it requires the recognition from local people, acknowledgement of local cultural values and idiosyncrasies" (p. 58).

I argue here that if place branding must integrate the hopes and wills of local communities and actors, inclusion of their habitus, values and tangible and intangible assets can also reinvigorate a sense of place, as local people will be involved with the process and will feel that they are taking part in it. Ashworth (2009) explains that people "make sense of place by constructing their own understandings of them in their minds through contact points" (p. 1). In line with Campelo (2015), the contact points include collected personal experiences; forms of representation such as films, novels and media reports and thoughtful policy interventions on spatial planning and spatial design. I concur with Kerr and Oliver (2015), in arguing that residents are the identity holders of a place and that "ideally the identities held by residents need to be considered within place branding strategies" (p. 66).

Kerr and Oliver (2015) reinforce the argument stated here – "a place branding strategy that is far removed from its place identity (what we are) will not likely be accepted as true by residents" (p. 66). The proposal stated here would reinvigorate spatial identities because place branding is identity driven, and a place-branding strategy that is far removed from its spatial identity (what we are) will not be received well, welcomed or accepted as true by residents, let alone by the external recipients of advertising communications. However, it is important not to associate the stimulation/reinvigoration of spatial identities, and thus identification, with place branding. While the stimulation/reinvigoration of spatial identities is certainly a part, and usually an important initial condition, of place branding, it does not, however, encompass it, as argued by Kavaratzis and Ashworth (2010). The identification of people with places extends beyond place branding, and place branding is more than the formation of identity, recreation, revitalization and promotion of place images as part of place management.

8.3. Towards a more geospatial way of thinking in place branding

I have assembled, here, six needs in rethinking place branding beyond place promotion, such as the definition of logos, slogans or the creation of social media accounts like 'visit place X', 'discover place Y' or even 'invest in place Z'. I have tried to summarize the key theoretical conclusions of the discussions I elaborated in the chapters above to underpin the effectiveness of place branding as a

strategic spatial-planning instrument. The arguments of Kavaratzis and Ashworth (2010), Kavaratzis *et al.* (2015), Van Assche and Lo (2011) and Albrechts (2013, 2015a, b), among others, support my argument that place branding can be the means of achieving a competitive advantage in order to increase investment (and attract investment); tourism revenues (and attract tourists) and attract media attention; sponsor community development; improvement of the socio-spatial and spatial-economic conditions of places; reinforcing spatial identity and a sense of place, as well as identification of the citizens with their place and activating all social forces to avoid social exclusion and unrest.

The aims of this section in revisiting the theory and making concluding remarks are manifold. First, they aim to contribute to the place-branding discussion by providing some answers to the questions posed by Ashworth and Kavaratzis (2010), such as - is place branding effective or even useful?. I have presented some arguments for a more effective and socially responsible form of place branding. Secondly, this section also aims to contribute, with insights from the spatial-planning literature in general and the strategic approach in particular, to the need identified by Ashworth and Kavaratzis (2010): "to create a common body of knowledge and vocabulary among different disciplines working in the field" (p. 7). Thirdly, it also brings a more geospatial way of thinking to the field of place branding as requested by Ashworth and Kavaratzis (2010), Andersson (2015) and Kavaratzis and Kalandides (2015). For instance, Ashworth and Kavaratzis (2010) stress that "questions of place-scale, place-function and place-identity should come to the foreground" (p.7) of research in the field of place branding. Fourthly, by exploring the intertwining of place branding and strategic spatial planning, this section also aims to contribute to the reframing of strategic spatial planning in line with the research conducted by Albrechts (2015a, 2015b). This concluding chapter, and the thesis overall, is an attempt to contribute towards that ambition.

The chapters included in this thesis, separately and collectively, set out to demonstrate the proposition that place branding, specifically at the regional scale, needs to be thought of as a continuous process involving strategic thinking, which is interlinked with all strategic spatial-planning goals. This is the underlying principle of all chapters presented here, which guides both the theoretical suggestions discussed above and this concluding section, which will further highlight the challenges of branding regions.

8.4. Future challenges and opportunities for place branding on the regional scale

It is generally accepted by scholars and practitioners, as argued in chapter 2, that place branding applies to different spatial scales such as as neighbourhoods, districts, cities, regions, across administrative borders of regions (as in the example debated in chapter 7, for the case of Galicia-northern Portugal) countries and even continents. As stressed by Braun (2015) and Hankinson (2015), each of these spatial scales entails its own particular characteristics and challenges for place branding. As I have argued in chapters 2 and 5, region branding has not been a frequent subject of place-branding research, and several challenges have confronted the process of branding regions, such as the region of northern Portugal.

Hankinson (2015) emphasizes that 'place branding' is currently used as an umbrella term that encompasses the literature of at least five areas, including the branding of cities, destinations, retail centres, nations and regions, with an increasing overlap between the main theoretical contributions

of those areas on the branding process of multiple spatial scales. These overlaps occur because place branding has been interpreted as particularly important for attracting people, activities and capital to places, as well as to give or enhance visibility to regions that are not top global hubs (OECD, 2013). Some regions, particularly in Europe, are seeking to construct regional brands from their vast networks of small and medium-sized cities in order to attract and retain international workers and firms, as well as to use resources more sustainably. Table 8.4. summarizes some of the general challenges of region branding and presents the opportunities of branding a region as a whole, bearing in mind the main strand of reasoning postulated in this Ph.D. thesis.

Table 8.4. Summarizing some of the challenges and opportunities of regional branding.

Challenges	Opportunities
The consensus challenge The difficulties of aligning all regional actors' - both public and private, as well as citizens' - interests, hopes and wills within the same region-branding strategy.	Region-branding strategies constructed on the basis of geographical proximity, including municipalities and parishes, may be more effective globally when compared to a municipal or city brand that is operationalized in an isolated way.
The diversity challenge The challenge of regional diversity, in terms of assets (tangible and intangible) and identities of communities.	A region brand can take better advantage of global networks. In this case, other forms of proximity in terms of knowledge bases and socio-cultural factors are also fundamental for the effectiveness of a region brand.
The decision-making challenge Some regions are devoid of a regional authority with the autonomy or decision-making capacity to decide upon their own future, to carry out an open and free envisioning process or to define the parameters of a region-branding strategy. When there is no central, decision-making authority in the region, the challenges of coordination and management of region branding are significant.	By branding a region as a whole, regional actors (both public and private) can take advantage of economies of scale; for instance, to build critical mass, increase media presence, gain political power or gain access to specialized services or specialized infrastructure. A region-branding process must be able to compensate for decision-making deficits by employing more of a collaborative network approach and working in coordinated partnerships and alliances.
The storyline challenge One of the most critical challenges for region branding is coordinating the messages communicated and streamlining efforts, not only across national and regional governments, but also across the private sector. All of these entities have different goals and the power to	Regional actors, public administrations, municipalities and inter-municipalities could become more competitive and take advantage of joining forces in a unique region brand. They will share resources, and communicate their uniqueness and potentials to the target audience on a wider scale.

create their own brands. A joint branding effort at the regional level, however, needs to be managed with strategic thinking, as argued in chapter 2, or in line with wider strategic spatial-planning instruments.

The consistency challenge Regions, either functional or political-administrative, are composed of cities, towns and villages. Most of these spatial scales can develop place branding; thus, all regions communicate in manifold ways. If the main messages that emanate from a region are not to some degree coordinated and communicated in a consistent way, there is a risk that the region will present diverging and even contradictory messages, which may prove in the end detrimental to the region's image.	It often happens that city brands give visibility to a region brand. In my view, the existence of a region brand does not eliminate or exercise control over city brands; nor will city brands diminish the value and effectiveness of a region brand. Both can align their goals, visions and interventions — strategic spatial planning could work as the necessary mechanism to coordinate the branding efforts of both.
The cultural background challenge Some cities that are located in formal or functional regions have difficulties in accessing the financial, organizational and even technical means to develop a place branding strategy independently.	The place-branding literature supports the idea that there is a strong theoretical link between a place's identity and the brand identity. A shared place identity will facilitate unity of purpose amongst regional actors. This common identity would simplify cooperation among regional actors, to reach agreements on core values, aims and visions for the region, and on how to operationalize them.
The lack of resources challenge Some cities that are located in formal or functional regions have difficulties in accessing the financial, organizational and even technical means to develop a place branding strategy independently.	A region-branding strategy, which implies the higher involvement of all human forces in a region, would gather together financial, institutional and technical capacities to further develop region branding. In addition, a successful region-branding strategy would generate positive economic impacts that can contribute to easing the lack of resources faced by smaller spatial scales, such as towns and villages. A region brand could work as an anchor brand for a region, thus compensating for the shortcomings of brands with smaller geographical scales.

The geographical location challenge Some regions, either functional or those well-defined politically and administratively, are identified "simply" by geographical coordinates such as North/Northern, South/Southern regions, which does not highlight any distinctive element. People only will be able to, for example, say/identify that northern Portugal is the territory in the North without making a clear statement about its assets, potentials, uniqueness and excellence.	A region-branding strategy would be able to communicate more to internal and external audiences than just a geographical location. As the use of a geographical position (Northern, Southern) as an "identifier" can be meaningless and not distinctive, a region brand has to be built with unique content, communicate a clear and powerful message, be able to position and give visibility and internal/external recognition to a region far beyond geographical coordinates.
The enable-change challenge This challenge is linked to the previous ones. Often, regions without official government mechanisms find it difficult to decide on matters that impact their future spatial development. In addition, cities have no decision-making capacity to enable structural change and they are often embedded in a geographical area facing deep social and economic troubles. Individual efforts to enable change will be fruitless.	To overcome this challenge, a region brand developed as part of strategic spatial planning at the national and regional levels would be effective in enabling structural change. Let us put it simply. The image of City A is characterized as having heavy and polluting industry and City A is located in a region characterized with the same features. Therefore, a city brand would be ineffective in supporting a reimagining process unless the region also embraces region branding in supporting a reimagining process. One can argue that a city brand can also distance itself from the region and a potential regional brand. I acknowledge this, but I also argue that co-production in a regional branding process and the co-creation of a region brand would avoid discrepancies between the city and the region. A region brand could mobilize other cities and integrate, or at least align with, strategic spatial planning to enable structural change - for example, from a heavy-industry region to a knowledge-based one.

Source: own elaboration based on the chapters above and complemented by OECD (2013); Zenker and Jacobsen (2015), Hankinson (2015), Andersson (2007; 2009), Pasquinelli (2011/2012), Hospers (2004; 2009; 2011; 2015).

Following Zenker and Jacobsen's (2015) arguments, the main challenge of branding regions is that of unification. This involves the complex issue of coordinating interests, aligning the desires of branding places embraced by cities and their municipal administrations. It is also a challenge to decide which spatial scale will give more value and contribute to recognition of a region as a unique

geographic entity. Are the images of the cities located in the region strong enough to positively influence a "new" region brand? Or are the regional assets *per se* strong enough to boost the region brand? Moreover, it is also necessary to align the region brand with the brand created in order to communicate the idea of a nation as a whole, if such a brand exists. I have underlined in chapter 3 the case of Portugal, with a mixture of destination brands at the national and regional levels that, in my view and also interviewees' opinions, causes confusion in people's minds. Figure 8.4. aims to demonstrate the complexity of region branding.
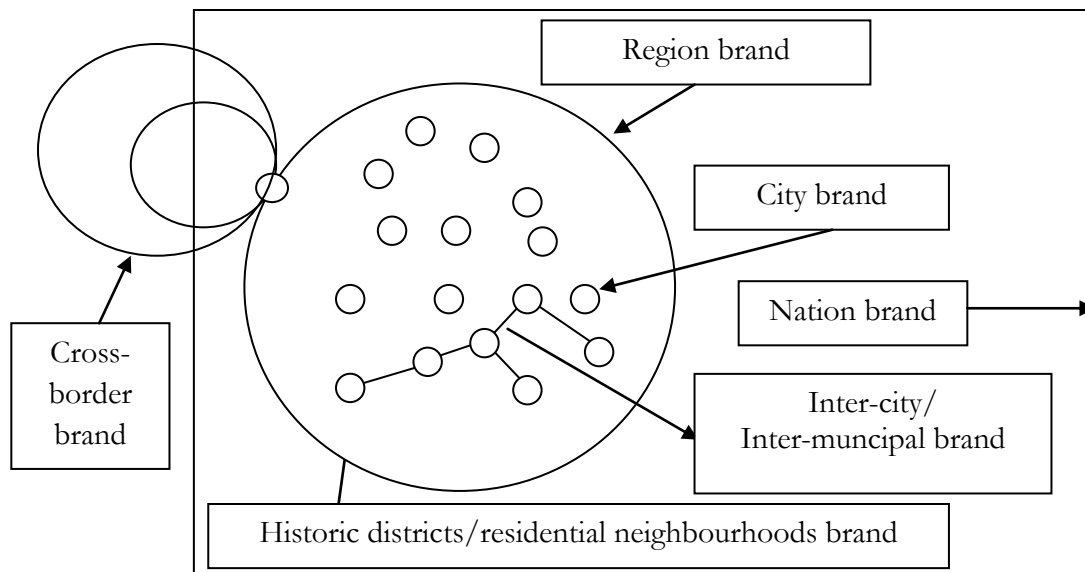

Figure 8.4. The "Russian Doll model" of nested scale hierarchies (each scale nestles within another) representing the complexity of regional branding.

I acknowledge that the above-outlined challenges need to be considered in regional brand building but do not disqualify it as an effective tool. These and other challenges merely counsel caution if the effectiveness is to be maximised. At its core, as Andersson (2009) has underlined regions need to develop a capacity to determine their own economic future, solve their own conflicts, city and legitimate their own decisions relevant in the short and long term. In this regard, place branding as an instrument of strategic spatial planning is an aid to mobilising regional actors and designing coherent and consistent strategic goals and envisioned futures. The regional actors interviewed for the purpose of this study have argued that a region-branding strategy could help solve some of the economic and social issues of northern Portugal. However, they also admit that a region branding strategy alone would be ineffective in bringing about structural change. The key concluding remarks of the regional actors' perspectives about a region branding strategy for northern Portugal will be further debated. The search for answers and clarity on this issue must continue in theory, as well as in more empirical research.

8.5. Future challenges and opportunities for region branding in northern Portugal

The conclusions above reinforce the analysis and theoretical arguments debated throughout the thesis. However, it is also useful to summarize research findings and link them to the theoretical propositions detailed above. Region branding deals with politically, economically or socially defined regions that can be within a single nation (for example, northern Portugal), or between several nations (for example, the Baltic Sea Region, see Andersson (2009) or Galicia-northern Portugal, see chapter 7 and Oliveira, 2015d). Place branding, including at the regional scale, aims "to maximize the efficient social and economic functioning of the area concerned, in accordance with whatever wider goals have been established" (Ashworth and Voogd, 1990, p. 41). Ashworth and Voogd (1990), as well as Ashworth *et al.* (2015), were clear that place branding could contribute to the achievement of strategic goals, but also that these goals have to be well established and preferably co-produced. By the latter (co-production), I mean the participation of citizens and experts on the definition of strategic priorities for the territory of a region as well as the definition of the parameters and content of a region brand. My work has considered a potential region-branding strategy for northern Portugal that is integrated as an instrument within the strategic spatial-planning approach. With this subsection, my aim is to replicate the key perspectives of the 16 regional actors interviewed for the purposes of this study; Chapter 5 discussed their opinions. In addition, I will discuss the challenges and opportunities of embracing place branding at the regional scale in northern Portugal by basing my remarks on interviewees' opinions.

According to interviewee number 11, "researching northern Portugal is a headache", and the key problems/weaknesses of northern Portugal were identified as a "complex matter" (IN 9), as the region is currently suffering from profound economic and social issues (IN 7). The Portuguese national government is experiencing deep social and economic problems. Following the memorandum of understanding signed in 2011 with the European Commission (EC), the European Central Bank (ECB) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the national government has been implementing austerity measures to cut spending in traditional areas of the welfare state (education, research and development and the health sector), including the redistribution of wealth between richer and poorer regions of the country. Despite a recent cyclical recovery, a series of deep-rooted problems/weaknesses prevail in northern Portugal, as in other Portuguese regions (IN 9; 15). The key weak points are structural in their nature (IN 9; 12). Table 8.5. provides a detailed summary of the challenges and opportunities of a region-branding strategy for the region that is incorporated or aligned with strategic spatial planning. The structure of the table accords with the theoretical model of this thesis presented in chapter 5.

Table 8.5. Summarizing some of the challenges and opportunities of a potential region-branding strategy for northern Portugal identified by the 16 interviewees during field work.

Components/vectors of the theoretical model discussed in chapter 5	Challenges	Opportunities that could emerge with region branding
A focus on a region's qualities, strategic domains, assets and attributes.	Diverse regional domains (tangible and intangible) located in different geographical areas in the region.	A region brand could be the right impulse to reorganize regional information regarding the key regional strategic domains, and its cultural and sporting agendas.
A focus on addressing regional economic, social and political constraints.	Lack of regional leadership and political will, and the high national/centralization of decision-making have also been identified as challenges. The absence of a national and regional strategy beyond the EU financial framework of 2014–2020, as well as a strong dependency on EU funding, have been identified as regional challenges. Other pressing economic and social challenges linger against the backdrop of fiscal austerity.	A region-branding strategy could support the development of an international agenda able to position and give visibility to the region as a whole.
A focus on enabling and communicating structural change.	Weak regional lobbying capacity to communicate the region's potential and its excellence, as well as the multiple sportive, cultural and religious agendas.	A region-branding strategy aligned with wider regional planning strategies would enable structural interventions, thus contributing to changing current patterns of spatial development.
A focus on involving key regional actors and civic society.	Weak coordination between regional actors. In addition, the majority of public investments (for instance, road infrastructures) have	Boosting territorial cohesion by aligning political, economic and social actors. A unique regional brand could support the

	been carried out with a lack of coordination between local governments and citizens as well. In addition, investments have been made in areas that are not priority for the real needs of communities (for example, Olympic-sized swimming pools instead of schools or social centres).	development of synergies between universities and research centres located in the region with local industry within a unified and envisioned strategy. Strategic spatial planning is essential here to bring together the desired future (as a result of envisioning) with the reality (the hopes, needs and wills of citizens and local organizations).
A focus on envisioning shared, better and realistic futures.	An absence of vision based on the present regarding possible shared futures that harmonize the different interests of civic society and institutions.	Region branding could be effective in envisioning a regional economic and social destiny based on shared futures, constructed in a multilevel governance environment and benefitting from strong cooperative ties among regional actors. Citizens must be able to participate, as well. A potential region brand must be co-created by all potential agents (from travel bloggers, as I have suggested in chapter 4, to citizens) and co-produce spatial strategies by public and private entities.
A focus on reinforcement of a sense of belonging and regional feelings.	The lack of involvement of citizens in spatial development and a more neutral attitude towards elements of regional identity, such as heritage, legacy, music and gastronomy.	Northern Portugal presents a strong regional identity (there is a feeling of belonging to northern Portugal) which is relevant content for feeding a potential region-branding strategy.

Source: own elaboration.

As has been stated in the thesis preface, this thesis critically explores the actual or potential roles of place branding as an instrument for the attainment of strategic spatial planning goals. Aiming to contributing to this exploration, Table 8.6. identifies the ten main strategic goals for northern Portugal for the period between 2014 and 2020 and the actual or potential roles of a region branding strategy for the attainment of those ten spatial strategies.

Table 8.6. The actual or potential roles of a regional branding strategy for northern Portugal as an instrument for the attainment of strategic spatial planning goals 2014-2020.

Ph.D. thesis main research question:
How and why might (and, eventually, should) place branding be taken as an instrument in the strategic spatial planning approach (thus contributing to the improvement of the socio-spatial and spatial-economic conditions), reshaping responses to contemporary challenges faced by places and shape clearly envisioned, agreed, socially responsible and realistic futures for places?

Strategic northern Portugal planning goals for the period 2014-2020	**The roles of a region branding strategy**
1) Strengthening research, technological development and innovation	Region branding could give visibility to the research taking place in regional universities and research centres to the outside. A region branding could also strengthen the ties with other regions of the country and explore research synergies. A region brand could work as an umbrella for ideas developed in the region by those living there.
2) Strengthening the competitiveness of small and medium sized enterprises	A region branding strategy could bring together small and medium enterprises in one platform, thus promoting raw materials of final products, support communication to attract investment or new costumers. Individual product brands could enhance a potential region brand and a potential region brand could make them flourish and lift enterprises to a higher competitive level.
3) Supporting the transition to a low-carbon economy in all sectors	A region branding must integrate environmental preoccupations and use

		it to engage with people as well as environmental friendly activities.
4)	Preserving and protecting the environment and promoting efficient use of resources	A region branding strategy as it presupposes aligning place actors would contribute to efficient use of economic and natural resources. Priorities and interests would be aligned (preferably).
5)	Promoting sustainable transportation and removing bottlenecks in key infrastructure	A region branding would demonstrate the needs to align infrastructure investments with the need of potential investors, tourism activity, facilities.
6)	Promoting sustainability and quality of employment and incentivise labour mobility	A region branding strategy could support the achievement of this goal as it would re-position and give visibility to the region with the intention of attracting investment and supporting spatial development.
7)	Promoting social inclusion, tackle poverty and discrimination	A region branding strategy must be integrative and take into consideration less favoured groups. The desire to spread a positive image about the region must take at the heart of the intervention the well-being of local communities. Furthermore, some social groups must take part in the decision-making process.
8)	Investing in education and vocational training to acquire skills and learning throughout life	
9)	Investing in institutional skills and efficiency of public administrations and public services at national, regional and local levels in order to introduce reforms, implement better regulation and good governance	A region branding strategy to be effective and successful has to be based on simple (that is, less complex and less bureaucratic) yet productive and efficient public services. The desire of designing a strong region brand could support the achievement of this goal as it requires capacity-building and new modes of governance based on strong communication between public-private-communities.

Ph.D. thesis main research question applied to the case study:

A region branding strategy for northern Portugal might (and eventually should) be developed in line with the strategic spatial planning documents in force - that is - Northern Portugal Strategic Guidelines 2014-2020. This is the main strategic planning document that establishes ten planning-goals/priority axes aimed at improving the socio-spatial and spatial economic condition of northern Portugal. Taking region branding as an instrument it the Northern Portugal Strategic Guidelines would contribute to re-imagining and re-positioning the region in those ten goals. As the planning document is the result of a thorough participatory process it represents the communities needs and would generate legitimacy for a region brand. Resources will be economised and an integrative spatial development would be reached. As the Strategic Guidelines 2014-2020 is essential to apply for EU funding – region branding could be fuelled with capital to contribute to the achievement of the strategic goals identified.

Source: own elaboration based on Northern Portugal Strategic Guidelines/Operational Programme 2014-2020 analysed in chapter 3, 5 and 6.

8.6. Concluding remarks on the summary of the research findings

Complementing the above-mentioned economic constraints (see Table 8.5.), IN 9 argued that northern Portugal currently has the lowest local/municipal purchasing power of the country, and only the municipalities of Braga and the greater metropolitan area of Porto stands above the national average. According to Statistics Portugal (INE, 2011), seven out of 10 municipalities with the lowest purchasing power per capita were located in northern Portugal (70%). Economic (structural) challenges are also related to the specialization of the labour force (IN 9, 15). The low-skilled workforce (IN 12) associated with traditional industry (for example, textiles, clothing and footwear) inform the image of northern Portugal (IN 1, 4, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15). A high unemployment rate, lower purchasing powers and depopulation are also challenges the region must face.

The idea that northern Portugal has a productive sector with "low added value" has been progressively fuelled, with the support of national media channels (IN 8). Interviewee number eight went on to clearly state that "there is a bias regarding northern Portugal", meaning that when a particular innovative event takes place in the region and any product is developed there, it is very difficult to get the message across that the product has been made by northern Portuguese workers or in a firm located in the region. The same lack of attention seems to occur with sporting or cultural events that take place in the region and are often neglected by national media. This position has been also argued by other interviewees. For example, IN 8 convincingly states that the "decision-making capacity is centralized in Lisbon" and that when it comes to a subject of national interest — for example, the opening of an art exhibition or even an industrial investment — the panoply of communication channels discuss its location as only being possible in the greater Lisbon area; "there is a clear leadership deficit" (IN 8) able to support northern Portugal to build its own path, with its

own potential (IN 8). INs 2 and 8 argue that a region brand can be effective in giving visibility and improving the international reputation of northern Portugal's assets and potentialities.

Discovering ways of overcoming the centralization of decision-making among Portuguese regions seems to have been pursued by other institutions I interviewed. Several projects have been initiated by the European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation for the Euroregion of Galicia-northern Portugal (IN 5) and others at the expense of local associations (IN 4, 7), mainly to boost regional development through knowledge-based capacities, universities located in the region (IN 8) and competitive clusters such as the HCP (IN 6) and PortugalFoods (IN 16). Although the last two interviewees (IN 6, 16) embrace Portugal as a spatial scale for project making and implementation, they have been engaging with public and private entities. These entities were able to self-organize in a "non-strategy environment" (one lacking an effective, strategic spatial-planning document and institutional confusion) to involve key actors in a "highly centralized decision-making environment" and produce collectively long-term strategies and short-term actions. These agents seem to respond to the criticism of strategic spatial planning lodged by Newman (2008) and provide empirical evidence for the argument of Ledo (2000) that "determining the correct organizational form is as important as determining an economic development strategy" (p. 125).

The example of the autonomous community of Galicia in north-west Spain was given by several interviewees (IN 2, 5, 8) as an example of successful regional-based economic development and region-strategy making. Galicia enjoys autonomy and decision-making capacity over its own development path (IN 2). In this regard, IN 8 argues that it is necessary to develop an international agenda for Portugal that goes "beyond Lisbon", the Portuguese capital, just as the agenda of Barcelona goes beyond the agenda of Madrid (referring here to the central government of Spain).

Northern Portugal is "too important to be ignored" (IN 8) or to be "simply perceived as the factory of Portugal" with its dominance of the textile and footwear industry, as some of the interviewees argued (IN 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15). However, the Textile and Clothing Association of Portugal (IN 7) argues that northern Portugal is no longer perceived as traditional but as "having an industry with tradition". The interviewee supports that comment by saying that this "tradition is a driving force for innovation" and that some firms have been updating their models in response to the market. In addition, the region is already well known as having strong industrial capabilities to both adapt to and resist drastic market variations. However, this point has been criticized by IN 12 and IN 10. The region is still characterized as having a low-skilled labour force, which acts as a barrier to the implementation new modes of production and organization. Interviewees 8, 10 and 12 give the examples of Finland and Ireland. These countries faced deep economic and social problems but the capabilities of their labour forces supported the implementation of structural changes. The success of the structural changes in Finland can also be justified by the strong local autonomy in terms of the planning and service provisions that Finnish regions can enjoy (Sellers and Lindström, 2007). Furthermore, and according to Kalliomäki (2015), "Finland has recently launched a state-led, cross-sectoral planning process to create a new vision for the national spatial structure" (p. 115).

According to IN7, the textile industry of northern Portugal currently focuses on creativity (with the introduction of design and fashion) with a high degree of incorporation of technology, including nanotechnology in final products, products that are often tailor-made for a demanding customer (IN

7). In addition, the region has been shaping its image by producing high-quality shoes that are now reaching the global markets at a quite remarkable level (IN 12). Some of those footwear firms have created their own labels/brands, but most of them are quintessentially small and medium enterprises producing their shoes for multinational companies that are owners of brands and can benefit from strong distribution channels (IN 9, 10, 11, 12).

An onerous bureaucracy, a weak judicial system and a weak or non-existent decision-making capacity and leadership have been identified as the key issues facing the region, and are seen as administrative barriers for investment attraction and regional development (IN 13). Those key issues work against the expansion and improvement of the transportation system (IN 14), as well as the sustainable growth of local businesses and internal markets (IN 12, 13). Interviewees also asserted that some firms have difficulties in attracting a labour force, as the provision of public transportation is weak (IN 9, 11).

In light of the interviewees' opinions, the development of a region-branding exercise integrated as an instrument in strategic spatial planning requires the equal adoption of appropriate organizational structures, political willingness, leading voices, collective strategies and consensus among decision makers, organizations and citizens towards the envisioning of shared futures. Place branding in strategic spatial planning prioritizes participation, as it engages people with a place. This does not mean that place branding should be imposed or embedded by force in strategic spatial planning or in spatial plan making (for instance, at the regional scale), but could instead be the result of coordinated efforts between all actors and communities in a place. The key regional actors acknowledge that a region-branding strategy for northern Portugal might be fruitful in changing perceptions, supporting a reimagining process, as well as communicating to the country and beyond the fact that the northern Portugal region as a whole has been trying to implement structural changes.

Figure 8.5. represents the brand-anchor challenge, which is the challenge of aligning branding efforts currently taking place on different spatial scales with a new branding attempt. Is strategic spatial planning able to bridge the gap and work as the anchor for countries', regions' or cities' brands? I have been arguing that if place branding, independent of the scale of application, is taken as an instrument of strategic spatial planning, then spatial-planning strategies will guide spatial interventions and seek coordination between regional actors and the construction of visions for the future (envisioning). A region brand would attempt to communicate a structural change, the existence of regional assets and attract investors, tourists, researchers, talented people and potential new residents.

The main concluding remark from the research findings is that the institutional confusion existing in northern Portugal has resulted in a number of branding attempts that are neither integrated in a unique branding narrative nor interlinked with wider spatial-planning strategies.
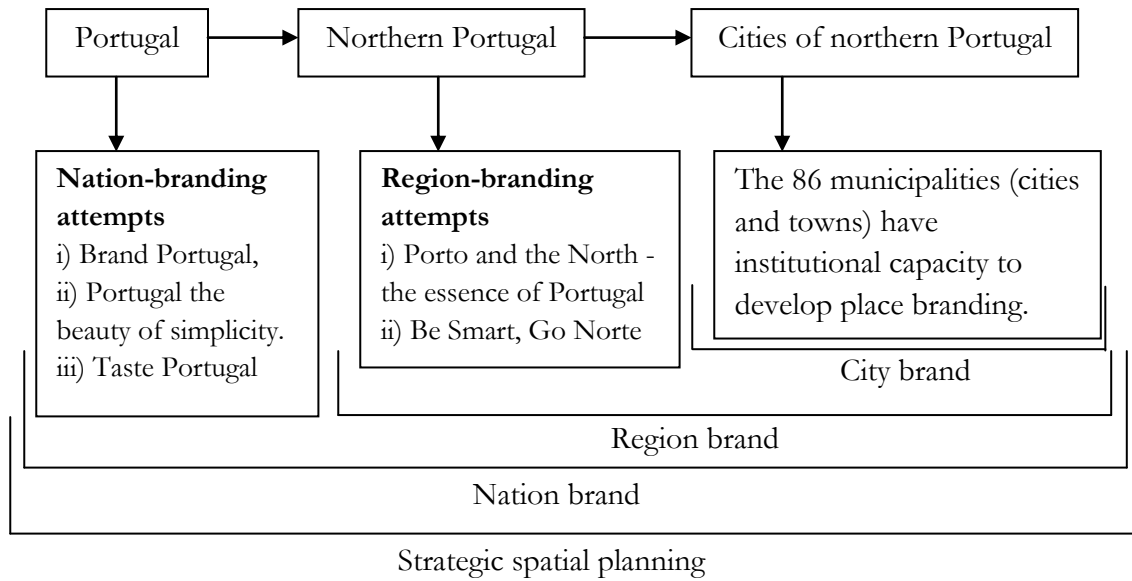
```
┌──────────┐      ┌──────────────────┐      ┌───────────────────────────┐
│ Portugal │─────▶│ Northern Portugal │─────▶│ Cities of northern Portugal │
└──────────┘      └──────────────────┘      └───────────────────────────┘
```

Figure 8.5. Current main branding efforts at the national and regional levels, and possible attempts at the city level. *Source*: own elaboration.

In my view, a region brand could work as an anchor for other potential city brands. I acknowledged that northern Portugal could benefit from the international reputation and recognition of cities located in the region, such as Porto, Braga and Guimarães. In addition, a northern Portugal branding strategy could also reinforce the image and position of "Brand Portugal" beyond tourism.

Strategic spatial planning at the national and regional levels could, and eventually should, coordinate such branding efforts. Strategic spatial planning would unify regional and national actors, align key strategic domains for northern Portugal (and the country itself) and identify spatial constraints. A region brand would be able to support the spatial-development path and contribute to fulfilling the strategic planning goals identified in strategic spatial-planning documents such as the Northern Portugal Operational Programme 2014–2020.

8.7. Future challenges for place branding and strategic spatial planning

This Ph.D. thesis has made a small contribution to the theoretical underpinning of place branding by elucidating the research and practice of the strategic spatial-planning instrument. This approach aims to go beyond the corporate branding and marketing approach to the process of branding places, without aiming to underestimate the value and relevance of that approach. The thesis highlights the value and effectiveness of a spatial-planning approach to place branding in support of structural change and reimagining, rescaling and envisioning processes. Empirical evidence was gathered by taking a peripheral European region facing several socio-economic challenges in the current period (northern Portugal) as a case study.

The theoretical propositions discussed in this thesis are put forward in the hope that they might steer interests towards the alignment of a place branding strategic spatial planning, independent of

the scale of application (nations, regions, cross-border regions, cities, inter-cities, districts and neighbourhoods) as well as the nature and the stage of the branding process itself — whether this is a rebranding process, a new one or a process occurring in terms of wider spatial-planning strategies. An exhaustive review of the literature has been carried out to establish theoretical and empirical links between place branding and the strategic spatial-planning approach. Searches for additional links, however, are necessary to make a fuller contribution to rethinking place branding as a more geospatial phenomenon, and thus contributing to the theoretical maturation of the field. In addition, those new links would contribute to the reframing of strategic spatial planning by introducing a new instrument to the toolbox of spatial planners in general, and strategic spatial planners in particular.

As a suggestion for future research, it would be of great value to explore the theoretical links between place branding and the concepts of economic geography, such as constructing a regional advantage (following the preliminary approach developed by Oliveira, 2015d) or regional innovation systems. In addition, several authors argue over the complexity of branding places (for example, Kavaratzis *et al.*, 2015; Zenker and Jacobsen, 2015; Kavaratzis and Kalandides, 2015), while others argue that place branding can become a vital strategic governance practice (for example, Ashworth and Kavaratzis, 2009; Eshuis and Edwards, 2013; Eshuis *et al.*, 2013; Kavaratzis, 2004; Klijn *et al.*, 2012; Zavattaro and Adams, 2015). It also seems relevant to explore the theoretical linkage between place branding and complexity theory in spatial planning (for example, de Roo, Hillier, Van Wezemael, 2012) and evolutionary governance theory (Van Assche *et al.*, 2014).

I have justified in almost all chapters of this thesis the reasons that northern Portugal was selected as the case study. Despite the fact that undertaking the empirical work was a great pleasure and very fruitful, additional research is needed to prove the theoretical assumptions postulated here. The field would benefit from extension of the research areas to other Portuguese regions, as well as by taking other European regions for comparison and theory testing. Chapter 7 shows my attempt to expand the research area beyond the funding proposal, which mentioned only northern Portugal as a case study, to include Galicia due to its geographical and cognitive proximity. However, in-depth interviews need to be conducted with regional actors in Galicia to build empirical evidence in order to establish the relevance of region branding and branding across administrative border regions — in this case, the Euroregion of Galicia-northern Portugal. I think that deepen the research on a potential cross-border brand for Galicia-northern Portugal would prominently benefit both, place branding and strategic spatial planning. I also acknowledge that some of the readers can argue on something like a super-national "brand" in Portugal, namely the concept of "Lusofonia/Lusophony" - which aims to unite culturally and linguistically Portuguese-speaking countries. Researching the cultural, historical and linguistic ties between these countries and the relevance of a super-national brand would greatly improve the literature on place branding at the country level.

It is the contention of this Ph.D. thesis that a strategic spatial-planning approach to place branding can help the field become more embedded as an instrument for the attainment of strategic spatial-planning goals for places such as regions. It can also help to shape envisioned shared futures, contribute to improving the socio-spatial and spatial-economic conditions as well as making a significant contribution to spatial development, thus steering clear of the dominant corporate branding and marketing approach and avoiding accusations of irrelevance, ineffectiveness, elitism

and self-regarding fascination. It is also my heartfelt hope that this Ph.D. thesis will stimulate critical reflections on the future of place branding and strategic spatial planning, inspiring place marketers, spatial planners, geographers and consultants, among other experts, to bring a much needed geospatial consciousness to the phenomenon of place branding.

References

Abis, E. and Garau, C. (2016) An Assessment of the Effectiveness of Strategic Spatial Planning: A Study of Sardinian Municipalities. *European Planning Studies*, 24(1): 139-162.

Addis, M., Miniero, G., Scopellite, I., and Soscia, I. (2007) *Creating consumption experience to build brand image*. Conference paper, thought leaders international conference on brand management, Birmingham Business School, UK.

Albrechts, L. (1999) Planners as catalysts and initiators of change: The new structure plan for Flanders. *European Planning Studies*, 7(5): 587-603.

Albrechts, L. (2004) Strategic (spatial) planning re-examined. *Environment and Planning B: Planning and Design,* 31(5): 743-758.

Albrechts, L. (2006) Bridge the gap: From spatial planning to strategic projects. *European Planning Studies,* 14(10): 1487-1500.

Albrechts, L. (2010a) How to Enhance Creativity, Diversity and Sustainability in Spatial Planning Strategic Planning Revisited. in: M. Cerreta, G. Concilio and V. Monno (Eds) *Making Strategies in Spatial Planning: Knowledge and Values*. Dordrecht, the Netherlands: Springer Science + Business Media B.V, pp. 3-25.

Albrechts, L. (2010b) More of the same is not enough! How could strategic spatial planning be instrumental in dealing with the challenges ahead? *Environment and Planning B: Planning and Design,* 37(6): 1115–1127.

Albrechts, L. (2010c) Enhancing Creativity and Action Orientation in Planning. in: J. Hillier and P. Healey (Eds.) *The Ashgate Research Companion to Planning Theory Conceptual Challenges for Spatial Planning*. Surrey, UK: Ashgate Publishing, pp. 215-232.

Albrechts, L. (2013) Reframing strategic spatial planning by using a coproduction perspective. *Planning Theory,* 12(1): 46-63.

Albrechts, L. and Balducci, A. (2013) Practicing Strategic Planning: In Search of Critical Features to Explain the Strategic Character of Plans. *disP - The Planning Review* 49(3): 16-27.

Albrechts, L., Alden, J. and Rosa Pires, A. (2001) In search for new approaches for planning. in: L. Albrechts, J. Alden and A. Rosa Pires (Eds.) *The changing institutional landscape of planning*. Aldershot, UK: Ashgate Publishing, pp. 1-17.

Albrechts, L., Healey, P., and Kunzmann, K. (2003) Strategic Spatial Planning and Regional Governance in Europe. *Journal of the American Planning Association,* 69(2): 113-129.

Albrechts, L. (2015a) Ingredients for a more radical strategic spatial planning. *Environment and Planning B: Planning and Design,* 42(3): 510-525.

Albrechts, L. (2015b) Breaking Out of the Box: Ingredients for a More Radical Planning. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences,* 184(20): 104-110.

Allan, M. (2012) Experience masterplanning – The driver of destination branding and marketing. Proceedings of the 4th International Conference on Destination Branding and Marketing, Cardiff, Wales: Cardiff Metropolitan University.

Allmendinger, P. (2009) *Planning Theory*. Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan.

Allmendinger, P. and Haughton, G. (2010) Spatial planning, devolution, and new planning spaces. *Environment and Planning C: Government and Policy,* 28(5): 803–818.

Alonso, I. and Bea, E. (2012) A tentative model to measure city brands on the Internet. *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy,* 8(4): 311-328.

Alvarez, M.D. (2012) Guest editorial: new perspectives in destination management. *Journal of Travel and Tourism Research Special Issue Destination Management*, 12(1): 1-3.

Alvarez, M.D. and Asugman, G. (2006) Explorers versus planners: a study of Turkish tourists. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 33(2): 319-338.

Amante, M. (2013) Recovering the Paradox of the Border: Identity and (Un)familiarity Across the Portuguese-Spanish Border. *European Planning Studies*, 21(1): 24-41.

Amin, A. and N. Thrift (1994) 'Living in the global', in Amin, A. and N. Thrift (Eds.) *Globalization, Institutions and Regional Development in Europe*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Anderson, J., O'Dowd, L. and Wilson, T. (2003). *New Borders for a Changing Europe. Cross-Border Cooperation and Governance*. London and Portland, UK and USA: Frank Cass.

Andersson, I. (2014) Placing place branding: an analysis of an emerging research field in human geography. *Geografisk Tidsskrift-Danish Journal of Geography,* 114(2): 143-155.

Andersson, I. (2015) *Geographies of Place Branding - Researching through small and medium-sized cities*. Unpublished Doctoral Thesis, Stockholm University, Stockholm, Sweden, Retrieved September 03, 2015 from http://repub.eur.nl/res/pub/13694/.

Andersson, M. (2007) Region branding: The case of the Baltic Sea Region. *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy,* 3(2): 120-130.

Andersson, M. (2009) Building a visible and attractive region: identity, image, branding and transnational cooperation in the Baltic Sea Region. in: A. Ellefors, and E. Hofrén, (Eds.), *Crossing Perspectives: Baltic Sea Region*. Norrköping: Arkitektkopia, pp. 1-19.

Andersson, M. (2010) Place branding and place promotion efforts in the Baltic Sea Region–a situation analysis. Copenhagen: Baltic Development Forum. Retrieved September 03, 2015 from http://www.bdforum.org/cmsystem/wpcontent/uploads/files/thematic_reports_brandin_place_promotion_bsr_2010.pdf.

Andranovich, G. (2001) Olympic cities: Lessons learned from mega-event politics. *Journal of Urban Affairs*, 23(2): 113-131.

Anholt, S. (2002) "Foreword" to the special issue on place branding. *Journal of Brand Management,* 9(4/5): 229-239.

Anholt, S. (2007) *Competitive Identity: The New Brand Management for Nations, Cities and Regions*. Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan.

Anholt, S. (2010) *Places: Identity, Image and Reputation*. Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan.

Asheim, B., Boschma, R. and Cooke, P. (2011) Constructing regional advantage: Platform policies based on related variety and differentiated knowledge bases. *Regional Studies*, 45(7): 893-904.

Ashworth, G. J. (2005) Puo una citta olandese diventare italiana? Il cambiamento strategico del cuore di Groningen [Can a Dutch city become Italian? The strategic change of the heart of Groningen]. in: F. Martinelli (Ed) *La Pianificazione Strategica in Italia e in Europa: Metodologie ed Esitia Confronto*

[Strategic planning in Italy and in Europe: methodology and issues to tackle], Milano, Italy: Franco Angeli, pp. 181-202.

Ashworth, G. J. (2011a) Should we brand places? *Journal of Town and City Management,* 1(3): 248-252.

Ashworth, G. J. (2011b) Book-review: Place Branding: Glocal, Virtual and Physical Identities, Constructed, Imagined and experienced, *Tourism Management*, 32(3): 702-03.

Ashworth, G. J. (2012) Book-review: International place branding yearbook 2010: Place branding in the new age of innovation. *Tourism Management,* 33(2): 484–485.

Ashworth, G. J. and Kavaratzis, M. (Eds.) (2010) *Towards Effective Place Brand Management Branding European Cities and Regions.* Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar Publishing.

Ashworth, G. J. and Voogd, H. (1990) *Selling the City: Marketing Approaches in Public Sector Urban Planning.* London: Belhaven Press.

Ashworth, G. J. and Voogd, H. (1994) Marketing and place promotion. in: J. Gold and S. Ward (Eds.) *Place Promotion, the Use of Publicity and Marketing to Sell Towns and Regions.* Chichester, UK: John Wiley.

Ashworth, G. J., Kavaratzis, M. and Warnaby, G. (2015) The Need to Rethink Place Branding, in: M. Kavaratzis, G. Warnaby, and G. J. Ashworth (2015) *Rethinking Place Branding Comprehensive Brand Development for Cities and Regions.* Cham, Switzerland: Springer International Publishing, pp. 1-12.

Ashworth, G.J. and Voogd, H. (1988) Marketing the city: concepts, processes and Dutch applications. *The Town Planning Review*, 59(1): 65-79.

Avraham, E. and Ketter, E. (2008) *Media strategies for marketing places in crisis.* Oxford, UK: Butterworth Heinemann.

Azevedo, A. (2004) Image transference from product branding to place branding: the case study of Marinha Grande Mglass. *International Review on Public and Non Profit Marketing,* 1(2): 101-11.

Azevedo, A., Custódio, M., Perna, F. (2013) Are you happy here? The relationship between quality of life and place attachment. *Journal of Place Management and Development,* 6(2): 102-19.

Azevedo, A., Magalhães, D. and Pereira, J. (2010) *City Marketing - My Place in XXI.* Porto, Portugal: Vida Vida Económica Editorial SA.

Baidal, J. (2014) Spain: From the Mass Model to a New Tourism Economy, in: C. Costa, E. Panyik and D. Buhalis (Eds.) *European Tourism Planning and Organisation Systems the EU Member States.* Bristol, UK: Channel View Publications, pp. 352-66.

Balakrishnan, S. (2009) Strategic branding of destinations: a framework. *European Journal of Marketing* 43(5/6): 611-629.

Balducci, A. (2008) Constructing (Spatial) Strategies in Complex Environments*,* in Van den Broeck, J., Moulaert, F. and Oosterlynck, S. (Eds.), *Empowering the Planning Fields: Ethics, Creativity and Action.* Leuven, Belgium: Acco, pp. 79-99.

Balducci, A. and Fedeli, V. (2011) New planning approaches/challenges for urban and territorial planning in contemporary cities, in: A. Balducci, V. Fedeli and G. Pasqui (Eds.) *Strategic Planning for Contemporary Urban Regions: City of Cities: A Project for Milan.* Surrey, UK: Ashgate Publishing, pp. 55-65.

Balducci, A., Fedeli, V. and Pasqui, G. (2011) *Strategic Planning for Contemporary Urban Regions: City of Cities: A Project for Milan.* Surrey, UK: Ashgate Publishing.

Baptista, I. (2012) How Portugal Became an 'Unplanned Country': A Critique of Scholarship on Portuguese Urban Development and Planning. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 36(5): 1076-92.

Barke, M. (1999) City marketing as a planning tool, in: M. Pacione (Ed.) *Applied Geography: Principles and Practice*. London, UK: Routledge, pp. 486-496.

Bellini, N., Loffredo, A. and Pasquinelli, C. (2010) Managing Otherness: the political economy of place images in the case of Tuscany. in: G. Ashworth and M. Kavaratzis (Eds.) *Towards Effective Place Brand Management –Branding European Cities and Regions*. Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar Publishing Limited, pp. 89-115.

Bennett, R. and Savani, S. (2003) *The rebranding of city places: An international comparative investigation. International Public Management Review,* 4(2): 70-87.

Berg. P. and Björner, E. (Eds.) (2014) *Branding Chinese Mega-Cities Policies, Practices and Positioning*. Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar Publishing.

Best Place Institute/European Place Marketing Institute (2015) *Place Marketing & Branding 2015+*. Retrieved September 27, 2015, from http://bestplaceinstytut.org/RAPORT2015.pdf

Bloom Consulting (2013) *Bloom Consulting Country Brand Ranking*. Retrieved December 1, 2013, from http://blooconsulting.com/sites/default/files/files/Bloom_Consulting_Country_Brand_Rankin g_Tourism_2013.pdf

Bloom Consulting (2014) *Portugal City Brand Ranking 2014*. Retrieved December 10, 2014, from http://bloomconsulting.com/pdf/rankings/Bloom_Consulting_City_Brand_Ranking_2014_Port ugal.pdf

Boisen, M., Terlouw, K. and Van Gorp, B. (2011) The selective nature of place branding and the layering of spatial identities. *Journal of Place Management and Development*, 4(2): 135-47.

Bonoma, T. V. (1985) Case Research in Marketing: Opportunities, Problems, and a Process. *Journal of Marketing Research*, XXII: 199-208.

Boschma, R. (2014) Constructing regional advantage and smart specialisation. *Scienze Regionali-Italian Journal of Regional Science*, 13(/): 51-68.

Boyle, D. and Harris, M. (2009) *The challenge of coproduction. How equal partnerships between professionals and the public are crucial to improving public services*. Discussion paper. London, UK: Nesta.

Braun, E. (2008) *City Marketing: Towards an Integrated Approach*. Unpublished Doctoral Thesis, Erasmus Research Institute of Management, Rotterdam, the Netherlands. Retrieved August 3, 2013, from http://repub.eur.nl/res/pub/13694/

Braun, E. (2015) Foreword: Interregional Place Branding: A New Frontier?, in: S. Zenker and B.P. Jacobsen (Eds.) *Inter-regional place branding: best practices, challenges and solutions*, Cham, Switzerland: Springer International Publishing, pp. v-vi.

Braun, E., Eshuis, J. and Klijn, E.-H. (2014) The effectiveness of place brand communication. *Cities,* 41(Part A December): 64-70.

Braun, E., Kavaratzis, M., Zenker, S. (2013) My city – my brand: the different roles of residents in place branding. *Journal of Place Management and Development*, 6(1):18-28.

Brayshaw, D. (1995) Negative publicity about tourism destinations-a Florida case study. *Travel and Tourism Analyst*, 5(-): 62-71.

Brent-Ritchie, J. and Crouch, G. (2011) *The Competitive Destination: A Sustainable Tourism Perspective*. Oxfordshire, UK: CAB International.

Bryson, J. and Roering, W. (1988) Initiation of strategic planning by governments. *Public Administration Review,* 48(6): 995–1004.

Bucken-Knapp, G. and Shack, M. (2001) *Borders Matter: Transboundary Regions in Contemporary Europe*. Aabenraa, Denmark: Danish Institute of border Regions.

Buhalis, D. (2000) Marketing the competitive destination of the future. *Tourism Management* 21(1): 97-116.

Buhalis, D. and Matloka, J. (2013) Technology-enabled tourism destination management and marketing, in: C. Costa, E. Panyik and D. Buhalis (Eds.) *Trends in European Tourism Planning and Organisation*. Bristol, UK: Channel View Publications, pp. 339-350.

Buhalis, D., Leung, D. and Law, R. (2011) eTourism: critical information and communication technologies for tourism destinations, in: W. Youcheng and P. Abraham (Eds.) *Destination Marketing and Management, Theories and Applications*, Oxfordshire, UK: CAB International, pp. 205-224.

Butler, T. (1998) Towards a hermeneutic method for interpretive research in information systems. *Journal of Information Technology*, 13(-):285-300.

Campbell, H. and Marshall, R. (2006) Towards justice in planning: a re-appraisal. *European Planning Studies*, 14(2): 239-52.

Campelo, A. (2015) Rethinking Sense of Place: Sense of One and Sense of Many, in: M. Kavaratzis, G. Warnaby, and G. J. Ashworth (Eds) *Rethinking Place Branding Comprehensive Brand Development for Cities and Regions*. Cham, Switzerland: Springer International Publishing, pp. 51-60.

Carson, D., Gilmore, A., Gronhaug, K. and Perry, C. (2001) *Qualitative Research in Marketing*. London, UK: Sage Publications.

Castro, E.C. and Nogueira, F. (2011) Strategic spatial planning in Portugal: practice innovation and local governance challenges, Conference Proceedings of CITTA 4th Annual Conference on Planning Research Innovation in Governance and Decision Making in Planning Retrieved June 15, 2015, from http://citta-conference.fe.up.pt/editions/2011

CCDRN - North Regional Coordination and Development Commission (2013) *Quarterly Report - North Scenario for the 4th quarter of 2013*. Retrieved January 20, 2014, from http://www.ccdr-n.pt/regiao-norte/norte-conjuntura/149/ccdr-n-publica-norteconjunturarelativo-ao-4-trimestre-de-2013

CCDRN - North Regional Coordination and Development Commission (2014a) *Quarterly Report - North Scenario for the 1st quarter of 2014*. Retrieved January 20, 2014, from http://www.ccdr-n.pt/sites/default/files/nc_2014_1trim.pdf

CCDRN - North Regional Coordination and Development Commission (2014b) *The Northern Region*. Retrieved March 10, 2015, from http://www.ccdr-n.pt/regiao-norte/apresentacao

CCDRN - North Regional Coordination and Development Commission (2014c) *Quarterly Report - North Scenario for the 3rd quarter 2014*. Retrieved March 10, 2015, from http://www.ccdr-n.pt/sites/default/files/nc_2014_3trim.pdf

CCDRN - North Regional Coordination and Development Commission (2014d) *Northern Portugal Strategic Guidelines/Operational Programme 2014-2020.* Retrieved June 15, 2015, from http://norte2020.pt/

CCDRN - North Regional Coordination and Development Commission (2014f) (c) *Northern Portugal Smart Specialization Strategy 2014-2020.* Retrieved June 15, 2015, from https://www.portugal2020.pt/Portal2020/Media/Default/Docs/EstrategiasEInteligente/EREI%20Norte.pdf

CCDRN - North Regional Coordination and Development Commission (2015a) *Quarterly Report - North Scenario for the 2ⁿᵈ quarter 2014.* Retrieved November 2, 2015, from http://www.ccdr-n.pt/sites/default/files/nc_2015_2trim.pdf

CCDRN - North Regional Coordination and Development Commission (2015b) *Be Smart. Go Norte.* Retrieved October 1, 2015, from http://www.ccdr-n.pt/servicos/biblioteca/publicacoes/lista-publicacoes

CCDRN - North Regional Coordination and Development Commission (2009) *Regional Spatial Plan (PROT- Plano Regional de Ordenamento do Território do Norte).* Retrieved June 15, 2015, from http://consulta-prot-norte.inescporto.pt/

Cerreta, M., Concilio, G. and Monno, V. (Eds) (2010) *Making Strategies in Spatial Planning: Knowledge and Values.* Dordrecht, the Netherlands: Springer Science + Business Media B.V.

Chai, Y., Huang, G., Yang, Z., Sun, W., and Chen, B. (2009) Investigation of public's perception towards rural sustainable development based on a two-level expert system. *Expert Systems with Applications*, 36(5): 8910-8924.

Chan, C.-S. and Marafa, L.M. (2013) A review of place branding methodologies in the new millennium. *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy,* 9(4): 236-53.

Clifton, N. (2011) Regional Culture in the Market Place: Place Branding and Product Branding as Cultural Exchange, *European Planning Studies*, 19(11): 1973–1994.

Colomb, C. and Kalandides, A. (2010) The "Be Berlin" Campaign: Old Wine in New Bottles or Innovative Form of Participatory Place Branding? in: G.J. Ashworth and M. Kavaratzis (Eds.) *Towards Effective Place Brand Management-Branding European Cities and Regions.* Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar Publishing, pp. 173-90.

Cooke, P. (2007) To construct regional advantage from innovation systems first build policy platforms. *European Planning Studies*, 15(2): 179-194.

Costa, C. and Vieira, A. (2014) Tourism Planning and Organisation in Portugal, in: C. Costa, E. Panyik and D. Buhalis (Eds.) *European Tourism Planning and Organisation Systems the EU Member States.* Bristol, UK: Channel View Publications, pp. 384-98.

Costa, C., Panyik, E. and Buhalis, D. (Eds.) (2014). *European Tourism Planning and Organisation Systems the EU Member States.* Bristol, UK: Channel View Publications.

Cremer-Schulte, D. (2014) With or Without you? Strategic Spatial Planning & Territorial Re-scaling in Grenoble Urban Region. *Planning Practice and Research*, Special Issue: AESOP Congress and PhD workshop, Delft-Utrecht, 29(3), pp. 287-301.

Crockett, S. and Wood, L. (2000) Brand Western Australia: A totally integrated approach. *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, 5(3): 276-289.

Culler, J, (1981) Semiotics of Tourism. *The American Journal of Semiotics*, 1(1/2): 127-140.

Cunha, L. (2010) Desenvolvimento do Turismo em Portugal: Os Primórdios. *Fluxos and Riscos*, 1(-): 127-49.

Dann, G. (1996) *The Language of Tourism: A Socio-Linguistic Perspective*. Wallingford, UK: CAB International.

Daspit, J. and Zavattaro, S. (2014) Integrating innovation and absorptive capacity into the place branding process: A capability-based perspective. *Journal of Place Management and Development,* 7(3): 206-24.

Davoudi, S. and Strange, I. (Eds.) (2009) *Conceptions of Space and Place in Strategic Spatial Planning*. London, UK: Routledge.

Dawson, E. and Higgins, M. (2009) How planning authorities can improve quality through the design review process: Lessons from Edinburgh. *Journal of Urban Design,* 14(1): 101-114.

de Roo, G., Hillier, J. and Van Wezemael, J. (2012) *Complexity and Planning - Systems, Assemblages and Simulations*. Burlington, Vermont, UK: Ashgate Publishing.

Decrop, A. (1999) Triangulation in qualitative tourism research. *Tourism Management,* 20(1): 157-161.

Deffner, A. and Liouris, C. (2005) The impact of multiplexes in urban development: The case of Ster (Ex-Europlex) Cinema in Larissa. Proceedings of the 19th International AESOP conference. The Dream of a Greater Europe, Vienna: AESOP Association of European Schools of Planning, pp. 1–7.

Deffner, A. and Metaxas, T. (2006) Is city marketing opposed to urban planning? The elaboration of a pilot city marketing plan for the case of Nea Ionia, Magnesia, Greece. Proceedings of the 46th ERSA Conference Enlargement; Southern Europe and the Mediterranean, Thessaly, Greece: University of Thessaly, pp. 1–31.

Deffner, A. and Metaxas, T. (2010) Place marketing, local identity and branding cultural images in Southern Europe: Nea Ionia, Greece and Pafos, Cyprus, in: G.J. Ashworth and M. Kavaratzis (Eds.) *Towards Effective Place Brand Management-Branding European Cities and Regions*. Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar Publishing, pp. 49–68.

Dias, J.A. (2015) Portugal 2014. *O ano em que emigrámos mais do que nunca e morremos ainda mais do que nascemos.* Retrieved August 16, 2015, from http://observador.pt/2015/06/16/portugal-2014-o-ano-em-que-emigramos-mais-do-que-nunca-e-morremos-ainda-mais-do-que-nascemos/

Díaz-Luque, P. (2009) Official tourism web sites and city marketing, in: M. Gascó-Hernandez and T. Torres-Coronas (Eds.) *Information Communication Technologies and City Marketing: Digital Opportunities for Cities Around the World*. New York, USA: Information Science Reference, pp. 152–183.

Digital Tourism Think Tank (2013) *Digital Tourism Brand Index 2013*. Retrieved December 1, 2013, from http://thinkdigital.travel/

Dühr, S., Colomb, C., and Nadin, V., (2010) European Spatial Planning and Territorial Cooperation. New York, USA: Routledge.

Echtner, C.M. and Ritchie, R.B. (2003) The meaning and measurement of destination image. *Journal of Tourism Studies,* 14(1): 37–48.

Eriksson, J. (2013) *The role of unique attractions in the hyper competitive market of world tourism*. Retrieved December 1, 2013, from http://blog.bearing-consulting.com/2013/11/30/the-role-of-unique-attractions-in-the-hypercompetitive-market-of-world-tourism/

Eshuis J., Braun, E. and Klijn E.-H. (2013) Place marketing as governance strategy: an assessment of obstacles in place marketing and their effect on attracting target groups. *Public Administration Review*, 73 (3):507-516.

Eshuis, J. and Edward, A. (2013) Branding the city: The democratic legitimacy of a new mode of governance. *Urban Studies,* 50(5): 1066-82.

Eshuis, J., Klijn, E.-H. and Braun, E. (2014) Place marketing and citizen participation: branding as strategy to address the emotional dimension of policy making? *International Review of Administrative Sciences,* 80(1): 151-71.

Eugenio-Vela, J. S. and Barniol-Carcasona, M. (2015) The relationship between rural branding and local development. A case study in the Catalonia's countryside: Territoris Serens (El Lluçanes). *Journal of Rural Studies,* 37(February): 108-119.

EUR-Lex (2014) Commission Regulation (EU) No 868/2014 of 8 August 2014 amending the annexes to Regulation (EC) No 1059/2003 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the establishment of a common classification of territorial units for statistics (NUTS). Retrieved March 16, 2014, from http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32014R0868&from=EN

European Commission (2013) A*ttitudes of Europeans Towards Tourism*, Retrieved December 1, 2013, from http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/flash/fl_370_en.pdf

European Digital Landscape (2014) *European digital landscape 2014: we are social's snapshot of key digital data and statistics.* Retrieved May 29, 2014, from http://147.102.16.219/demo1/attachments/124_european%20digital%20landscape%202014.pdf

European Union (2000) *Lisbon Strategy.* Retrieved March 6, 2014, from http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/ec/00100-r1.en0.htm

European Union (2006) Regulation (EC) No 1082/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 July 2006 on a European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC). *Official Journal of the European Union, L210/19*. Retrieved March 6, 2014, from http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32006R1082:en:NOT

European Union (2010) *Europe 2020 Strategy.* Retrieved March 6, 2014, from http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2010:2020:FIN:EN:PDF

European Union (2011) European Territorial Cooperation: building bridges between people. Retrieved March 6, 2014, from http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/cooperate/cooperation/index_en.cfm

European Union (2013) Regulation (EC) No 1302/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 amending Regulation (EC) No 1082/2006 on a European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC) as regards the clarification, simplification and improvement of the establishment and functioning of such groupings. *Official Journal of the European Union, L347/303*. Retrieved March 6, 2014, from http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2013:347:0303:0319:EN:PDF

Eurostat (2014) General and regional statistics. Retrieved March 6, 2014, from http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/eurostat/home/

Evans, G. (2006) Branding the city of culture the death of city planning?, in: J. Monclus and M. Guardia (Eds.) *Culture, urbanism and planning.* Surrey, UK: Ashgate Publishing, pp 197-213.

Evans, G. (2015) Rethinking Place Branding and Place Making Through Creative and Cultural Quarters, in: M. Kavaratzis, G. Warnaby, and G. J. Ashworth (Eds) *Rethinking Place Branding Comprehensive Brand Development for Cities and Regions.* Cham, Switzerland: Springer International Publishing, pp. 135-158.

Faludi, A. (1996) Framing with images. *Environment and Planning B: Planning and Design*, 23(1): 93-108.

Faludi, A. (2010) Cohesion, Coherence, Cooperation: European Spatial Planning Coming of Age? New York, USA: Routledge.

Faludi, A. and van der Valk, A. (1994) Rule and Order: Dutch Planning Doctrine in the Twentieth Century. Dordrecht, the Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Publishers.

Ferrão, J. (2010) As Condições Sociais de Funcionamento da Politica Pública de Ordenamento do Território, *Research programme submitted as part of the examination role of research professor,* Lisboa, Portugal: Univerity of Lisbon.

Ferrão, J. and Mourato, J. (2012) Evaluation and spatial planning in Portugal: from legal requirement to source of policy-learning and institutional innovation, in: J.F. Dasí (Eds.) *De la evaluación ambiental estratégica a la evaluación de impacto territorial: reflexiones acerca de la tarea de evaluación*, València, Spain: Universitat de València, pp. 141-66.

Fetscherin, M. and Heinrich, D. (2015) Consumer brand relationships research: A bibliometric citation meta-analysis. *Journal of Business Research*, 68(2): 380-90.

Florek, M. (2011) Online city branding, in: K. Dinnie (Ed.) *City Branding: Theory and Cases.* Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave-Macmillan, pp. 82–90.

Florek, M. and Conejo, F. (2007) Export flagships in branding small developing countries: the cases of Costa Rica and Moldova. *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy,* 3(1): 53–72.

Florida, R. (2002) *The Rise of the Creative Class and How it's Transforming Work, Leisure, Community and Everyday Life.* New York, USA: Basic Books.

Flyvbjerg, B. (2006) Five Misunderstandings About Case-Study Research. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 12(2): 219-245.

Forester, J. (1989) *Planning in the Face of Power.* Berkeley, USA: University of California Press.

Forester, J. (2010a) Foreword of the book Making Strategies in Spatial Planning, in M Cerreta, G. Concilio, and V. Monno (Eds) *Making Strategies in Spatial Planning: Knowledge and Values.* Dordrecht, the Netherlands: Springer Science + Business Media B.V. pp v–vii.

Forester, J. (2010b) Creating spaces of (im)possibility, in: M. Hajer, J. Grijzen and van't Klooster, S. (Eds.) *Strong Stories: How the Dutch are Reinventing Spatial Planning.* Rotterdam, The Netherlands: 010 Publishers, pp.170-85.

Freire, J. (2009) Local people' a critical dimension or place brands. *Journal of Brand Management*, 16(7): 420-38.

Freire, J. (2011) Destination brands: Managing place reputation (3rd edition). *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy,* 7(4): 316-20.

Friedmann, J. (1987) *Planning in the Public Domain*. Princeton, USA: Princeton University Press.

Friedmann, J. (2004) Strategic spatial planning and the longer range. *Planning Theory and Practice*, 5(1): 49–62.

Friedmann, J. (2005) Globalization and the emerging culture of planning. *Progress in* Planning, 64(2005) 183-234.

Fürst, D. (2001) Regional governance-Ein neues Paradigma der Regionalwissenschaften? [Regional governance-A new paradigm of regionalism?] *Raumforschung und Raumordnung*, 5-6: 370-380.

Fyall, A., Wang, Y., and Garrod, B. (2012). Editorial. *Journal of Destination Marketing and Management*, 1(1/2): 1-3.

García, M., Horlings, L. Swagemakers, P. and Fernández, X. (2013) Place branding and endogenous rural development. Departure points for developing an inner brand of the River Minho estuary. *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy,* 9(2): 236-53.

Gault, M. (1989) *Villes intermédiaires pour L'Europe*, Paris, France: Syros.

Gertner, D. (2011a) Unfolding and configuring two decades of research and publications on place marketing and place branding. *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy*, 7(2): 91-106.

Gertner, D. (2011b) A (tentative) meta-analysis of the 'place marketing' and 'place branding' literature, *Journal of Brand Management*, 19(2): 112–131.

Gertner, D. and P. Kotler (2004) How can a place correct a negative image? *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy*, 1(1): 50-57.

Giannakourou, G. (2005) Transforming spatial planning policy in Mediterranean countries: Europeanization and domestic change. *European Planning Studies*, 13(2): 319-31.

Giovanardi, M. (2015) A Multi-scalar Approach to Place Branding: The 150th Anniversary of Italian Unification in Turin. *European Planning Studies*, 23(3): 597–615.

GNP-EGTC - European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation Galicia-Norte Portugal (2014) *Joint Investment Programme Galicia-northern Portugal 2014-2020*. Retrieved March 15, 2015, from http://www.gnpaect.eu/en/euroregion/PIC.pdf/view

Gold, J.R. and Ward, S.V. (Eds.) (1994) *Place Promotion: The use of Publicity and Marketing to sell Towns and Regions*, Chichester, UK: John Wiley.

Goldkuhl, G. (2012) Pragmatism vs interpretivism in qualitative information systems research. *European Journal of Information Systems*, 21(2): 135-146.

Goodstein, L., Nolan, T. and Pfeiffer, J. (1993) *Applied Strategic Planning*. New York, USA: McGraw-Hill.

Google Think (2013) *The 2013 Traveler*. Retrieved December 1, 2013, from http://ssl.gstatic.com/think/docs/2013-traveler_research-studies.pdf

Govers, R. (2013) Why place branding is not about logos and slogans. *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy*, 9(2): 71–75.

Govers, R. and Go, F. (2004) Projected destination image online: website content analysis of pictures and text. *Information Technology and Tourism*, 7(2): 73–89.

Govers, R. and Go, F. (2009) *Place Branding: Virtual and Physical Identities, Glocal, Imagined and Experienced*. Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan.

Govers, R., Go, F. and Kumar, K. (2007) Virtual destination image a new measurement approach. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 34(4): 977-97.

Graham, S. and Healey, P. (1999) Relational concepts of space and place: Issues for planning theory and practice. *European Planning Studies,* 7(5): 623-46.

Granados-Cabezas, V. (1995) Another mythology for local development? Selling places with packaging techniques: A view from the Spanish experience of city strategic planning. *European Planning Studies,* 3(2): 173–187.

Green, C. (2007) *Sales and marketing in a web 2.0 world.* Jacksomville, USA: HSAMI Foundation.

Greenberg, M. (2008) *Branding New York. How a City in Crisis was Sold to the World.* London, UK: Routledge.

Grosz, E. (1999) Thinking the new: Of futures yet unthought, in: E. Grosz (Ed.) *Becomings: Explorations in Time, Memory, and Futures.* Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, pp.15-28.

Gu, H., and Ryan, C. (2008) Place attachment, identity and community impacts of tourism: The case of a Beijing Hutong. *Tourism Management*, 29(4): 637–647.

Gutierrez, M. (2013) *O marketing territorial para o desenvolvimento sustentável da Euro região Galiza-Norte de Portugal.* Unpublished Master Thesis, Braga, Portugal: School of Economics and Management, Univeristy of Minho.

GWI - Global Web Index (2014) *Digital 2013 – a global analysis of how consumers spend their media time*. Retrieved May 29, 2014, from http://www.smartinsights.com/social-media-marketing/social-media-strategy/newglobal-social-media-research/

Habermas, J. (1993) *Justification and Application: Remarks on Discourse Ethics.* Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.

Hall, C. (1994) *Tourism and politics: Policy, power and place.* Chichester, UK: Wiley.

Hallsworth A., Parker, C. and Quin, S. (2015) *Markets Matter Reviewing the evidence & detecting the market effect*, Manchester, UK: Institute of Place Management, Manchester Metropolitan University. Retrieved October 1, 2015 from http://www.placemanagement.org/media/9501/Markets-Matter.pdf

Halme, J. (2014). S*takeholder participation in regional level place branding in Finland.* Retrieved April 13, 2015 from http://www.rha.is/static/files/Espon_Enecon_project/Aalborg_workshop/4.-juha-halme.pdf

Hamnett, S. (2002) The late 1990s: competitive versus sustainable cities. in S. Hamnett, R. Freestone (Eds.) *The Australian Metropolis*. Sydney, Australia: Allen and Unwin, pp. 168-88.

Hankinson, G. (2007) The management of destination brands: Five guiding principles based on recent developments in corporate branding theory. *Journal of Brand Management*, 14(3): 240-54.

Hankinson, G. (2010) Place branding theory: A cross-domain literature review from a marketing perspective, in: G.J. Ashworth and M. Kavaratzis (Eds.) *Towards Effective Place Brand Management Branding European Cities and Regions.* Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar Publishing, pp. 15-35.

Hankinson, G. (2015) Rethinking the Place Branding Construct, in: M. Kavaratzis, G. Warnaby, and G. J. Ashworth (Eds) *Rethinking Place Branding Comprehensive Brand Development for Cities and Regions.* Cham, Switzerland: Springer International Publishing, pp. 13-31.

Hanna, S. and Rowley, J. (2008) An analysis of terminology use in place branding. *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy,* 4(1): 61-75.

Hanna, S. and Rowley, J. (2011) Towards a strategic place brand-management model. *Journal of Marketing Management,* 27(5/6): 458–476.

Hanna, S.A. and Rowley, J. (2015) Rethinking Strategic Place Branding in the Digital Age, in: M. Kavaratzis, G. Warnaby, and G. J. Ashworth (Eds) *Rethinking Place Branding Comprehensive Brand Development for Cities and Regions.* Cham, Switzerland: Springer International Publishing, pp. 85-100.

Hannam, K. and Knox, D. (2005) Discourse analysis in tourism research: a critique. *Tourism Recreation Research,* 30(2): 23-30.

Harvey, D. (1989) From managerialism to entrepreneurialism: The transformation in urban governance in late capitalism. *Geografiska Annaler*, 71(1): 3-17.

Harvey, D. (1996) *Justice, Nature and the Politics of Difference.* Oxford, UK: Blackwel.

Harvey-Jordan, S. and Long, S. (2001) The process and pitfalls of semistructured interviews. *Community Practitioner*, 174(6): 219-21.

HCC – Hampshire County Council (1996) *Hampshire County Structure Plan 1996-2011 (Review): deposit version.* Winchester, UK: Winchester Hampshire County Council.

Healey, P. (1997a) An institutionalist approach to spatial planning, in: P. Healey, A. Khakee, A. Motte and B. Needham (Eds.), *Making Strategic Spatial Plans: Innovation in Europe.* London, UK: UCL Press, pp. 21-36.

Healey, P. (1997b) The revival of strategic spatial planning in Europe. in P. Healey; A. Khakee; A. Motte; B. Needham (Eds.) *Making strategic spatial plans. Innovation in Europe.* London, UK: UCL Press, pp. 3-19

Healey, P. (2003) Collaborative planning in perspective. *Planning Theory,* 2(2): 101-123.

Healey, P. (2004) The treatment of space and place in the new strategic spatial planning in Europe. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research,* 28(1): 45-67.

Healey, P. (2006a) *Collaborative Planning: Shaping Places in Fragmented Societies.* London, UK: Macmillan.

Healey, P. (2006b) Relational complexity and the imaginative power of strategic spatial planning. *European Planning Studies*, 14(4): 525-546.

Healey, P. (2007) *Urban Complexity and Spatial Strategies. Towards a Relational Planning for Our Times.* London, UK/New York, USA: Routledge.

Healey, P. (2009) The pragmatic tradition in planning thought. *Journal of Planning Education and Research*, 28(3): 277-292.

Healey, P. and Khakee, A. Motte, A. and Needham, B. (1999) European developments in strategic spatial planning. *European Planning Studies*, 7(3): 339-55.

Hemeroteca digital/Lisbon Municipality (n/year) *Tourism Magazine*, Retreived October 5, 2015 from http://hemerotecadigital.cm-lisboa.pt/Periodicos/RevistadeTurismo/1916/N01/N01_master/RevistadeTurismoVol1N01.pdf

Herstein, R. (2012) Thin line between country, city, and region branding. *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, 18(2): 147-155.

Hildreth, J. (2010) Place branding: A view at arm's length. *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy*, 6(1): 27–35.

Hillier, J. (2002) *Shadows of Power. An Allegory of Planning in Land-use Planning.* London, UK: Routledge.

Hillier, J. (2010) Post-structural complexity: strategic navigation in an ocean of theory and practice, in: M. Cerreta, G. Concilio and V. Monno (Eds) *Making Strategies in Spatial Planning: Knowledge and Values*, Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Springer Science + Business Media B.V, pp. 87-97.

Hillier, J. and Healey, P. (2010) The Ashgate Research Companion to Planning Theory – Conceptual Challenges for Spatial Planning. Surrey, UK: Ashgate Publishing.

Hiscott, R. (2013) *The beginner's guide to the Hashtag.* Retrieved October 28, 2015 from http://mashable.com/2013/10/08/what-is-hashtag/

Hornskov, S. B. (2007) On the management of authenticity: culture in the place branding of Oresund. *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy*, 3(4): 317-31.

Hospers, G.-J. (2004) Place marketing in Europe. The branding of the Øresund region. *Intereconomics*, 39(5): 271-279.

Hospers, G.-J. (2006) Borders, bridges and branding: the transformation of the Øresund region into an imagined space. *European Planning Studies*, 14(8): 1015-1019.

Hospers, G.-J. (2011) Place marketing in shrinking Europe: some geographical notes, *Tijdschrift voor Economische en Sociale Geografie*, 102 (3): 369-375.

Hospers, G.-J. (2015) The Dutch quest for a nation brand (case study), in: K. Dinnie, *Nation Branding: Concepts, Issues, Practice*, (2nd editions) Abingdon, UK: Routledge, pp. 181-184.

Houghton, P. and Stevens, A. (2011) City branding and stakeholder engagement, in: K. Dinnie (Ed.), *City Branding: Theory and Cases*, Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave-Macmillan, pp. 45-53.

Hsu, C. and Song, H. (2013) Destination image in travel magazines: a textual and pictorial analysis of Hong Kong and Macau. *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, 19(3): 253-268.

Hubbard, P. and Hall, T. (1998) The entrepreneurial city and the 'new urban politics', in: T. Hall and P. Hubbard (Eds.) *The entrepreneurial city: geographies of politics, regimes and representations*. Chichester, UK: Wiley, pp 1-13.

Hudson, M. and Hawkins, N. (2006) A tale of two cities - A commentary on historic and current marketing strategies used by the Liverpool and Glasgow regions. *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy*, 2(2): 155-76.

Ikuta, T., Yukawa, K. and Hamasaki, H. (2007) Regional branding measures in Japan - Efforts in 12 major prefectural and city governments, *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy*, 3(2): 131-143.

INE - Statistics Portugal (2013a) *Statistical Yearbook of Northern Portugal Region 2012*. Retrieved January 24, 2013 from http://www.ine.pt

INE - Statistics Portugal (2013b) *Study on the Local Purchasing Power 2011*. Retrieved March 10, 2015 from http://www.ine.pt

INE - Statistics Portugal (2014) *Statistical Yearbook of Northern Portugal Region 2013*. Retrieved March 10, 2015 from http://www.ine.pt

INE - Statistics Portugal (2015) Various regional indicators. Retrieved September 30, 2015 from http://www.ine.pt

Innes, J. and Booher, D. (1999) Consensus building as role playing and bricolage. Toward a theory of collaborative planning. *Journal of the American Planning Association*, 65(2): 9-26.

Innes, J.E. (1996) Planning through consensus building: a new view of the comprehensive planning ideal. *Journal of the American Planning Association,* 62(4), pp. 460-472.

ITPD - Institute of Tourism Planning and Development (2011) *Profile of Tourists Visiting Porto and North of Portugal 4ᵗʰ quarter of 2011.* Retrieved August 16, 2015 from http://www.ipdt.pt/downloads_estudos.php?l=en

ITPD - Institute of Tourism Planning and Development (2014) *Profile of Tourists Visiting Porto and North of Portugal 1ˢᵗ quarter of 2014.* Retrieved August 16, 2015 from http://www.ipdt.pt/downloads_estudos.php?l=en

ITPD - Institute of Tourism Planning and Development (2015) *International Barometer – The image of Portuguese tourism.* Retrieved August 16, 2015 from http://www.ipdt.pt/downloads_barometros.php?l=en

Jessop, B. (1997) The entrepreneurial city: Re-imaging localities, redesigning economic governance or restructuring capital, in: N. Jewson and S.E. McGregor (Eds.) *Transforming Cities: Contested Governance and New Spatial Divisions.* London, UK: Routledge, pp. 28-42.

Johansson, M. (2012) Place Branding and the Imaginary: The Politics of Re-imagining a Garden City. *Urban Studies,* 49(16): 3611-26.

Joshi, A. and Moore, M. (2004) Institutionalized coproduction: Unorthodox public service delivery in challenging environments. *The Journal of Development Studies,* 40(4): 31-49.

Kalandides, A. (2011a) The problem with spatial identity: revisiting the "sense of place". *Journal of Place Management and Development,* 4(1): 28-39.

Kalandides, A. (2011b) City marketing for Bogotá: a case study in integrated place branding. *Journal of Place Management and Development,* 4(3): 282-291.

Kalliomäki, H. (2015) Reframing strategic spatial planning as a 'coproductive trading zone' between state-led and place-based interests: Reflections from Maryland and Finland, *Land Use Policy,* 42(January): 113–23.

Kassarjian, H. (1977) Content analysis in consumer research. *Journal of Consumer Research,* 4(1): 8–18.

Kastenholz, E. (2002) *The role and marketing implications of destination images on tourist behaviour: The case of Northern Portugal.* Unpublished Doctoral Thesis, Aveiro, Portugal: Department of Economics, Management and Industrial Engineering, University of Aveiro. Retrieved August 20, 2013 from http://ria.ua.pt/bitstream/10773/1838/1/ 2005001493.pdf

Kastenholz, E., Eusébio, C. and Carneiro, M.J. (2013) Studying factors influencing repeat visitation of cultural tourists. *Journal of Vacation Marketing,* 19(4): 343-358.

Kaufman, J. and Jacobs, H. (1987) A public planning perspective on strategic spatial planning. *Journal of the American Planning Association,* 53(1): 21-31.

Kavaratzis and Kalandides (2015) Rethinking the place brand: the interactive formation of place brands and the role of participatory place branding, *Environment and Planning A,* 47(6): 1368–82.

Kavaratzis, M. (2004) From city marketing to city branding: Towards a theoretical framework for developing city brands. *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy,* 1(1): 58-73.

Kavaratzis, M. (2005) Place branding: A review of trends and conceptual models. *The Marketing Review,* 5(4): 329-342.

Kavaratzis, M. (2008) *From city marketing to city branding: An interdisciplinary analysis with reference to Amsterdam, Budapest and Athens*. Unpublished Doctoral Thesis. Groningen, the Netherlands, Faculty of Spatial Sciences, University of Groningen. Retrieved September 28, 2015 from https://www.rug.nl/research/portal/publications/pub(8a350ad6-8e60-4a67-8773-18380fe72855).html

Kavaratzis, M. (2010) Is corporate branding relevant to places?, in: G.J. Ashworth and M. Kavaratzis (Eds.) *Towards Effective Place Brand Management-Branding European Cities and Regions*. Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar Publishing, pp. 36-48.

Kavaratzis, M. (2012) From "necessary evil" to necessity: Stakeholders' involvement in place branding. *Journal of Place Management and Development* , 5(1): 7-19.

Kavaratzis, M. and Ashworth, G.J. (2005) City branding: An effective assertion of identity or a transitory marketing trick? *Tijdschrift voor Economische en Sociale Geografie*, 96(5): 506-14.

Kavaratzis, M. and Ashworth, G.J. (2006) Partners in coffee shops, canals and commerce: marketing the city of Amsterdam. *Cities*, 24(1): 16-25.

Kavaratzis, M. and Ashworth, G.J. (2008) Place marketing: How did we get here and where are we going? *Journal of Place Management and Development*, 1(2): 150-65.

Kavaratzis, M. and Ashworth, G.J. (Eds.) (2010) Place branding: Where do we stand? In: *Towards Effective Place Brand Management-Branding European Cities and Regions*. Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar Publishing, pp. 1-14.

Kavaratzis, M. and Hatch, M. (2013) The dynamics of place brands: An identity-based approach to place branding theory. *Marketing Theory*, 13(1): 69–86.

Kavaratzis, M., Warnaby, G. and Ashworth, G. J. (2015) *Rethinking Place Branding Comprehensive Brand Development for Cities and Regions*, Cham, Switzerland: Springer International Publishing.

Kemming, J. and Sandikci, O. (2007) Turkey's EU accession as a question of nation brand image. *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy*, 3(1): 31-41.

Kent, R. (1999) *Marketing Research: Measurement, Method and Application*. London, UK: International Thomson Business Press.

Kerr, G. and Oliver, J. (2015) Rethinking Place Identities, in: M. Kavaratzis, G. Warnaby, and G. J. Ashworth (Eds) *Rethinking Place Branding Comprehensive Brand Development for Cities and Regions*. Cham, Switzerland: Springer International Publishing, pp. 61-72.

Kinnear, S., Charters, K. and Vitartas, P. (Eds.) (2013) *Regional Advantage and Innovation: Achieving National Outcomes*. Heidelberg, Germany: Springer-Verlag.

Klijn, E.-H. Eshuis, J. and Braun, E. (2012) The Influence of Stakeholder Involvement on The Effectiveness of Place Branding. *Public Management Review*, 14(4): 499-519.

Kolb, B. (2006) *Tourism Marketing for Cities and Towns: Using Branding and Events to Attract Tourists*. Amsterdam, The Netherlands: Elsevier.

Kolbe, R.H. and Burnett, M.S. (1991) Content-analysis research: an examination of applications with directives for improving research reliability and objectivity. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 18(2): 243-50.

Konečnik, M. and Go, F. (2008) Tourism destination brand identity: The case of Slovenia. *Journal of Brand Management*, 15(3): 177–89.

Kotler, P., Asplund, C., Rein, I. and Haider, D. (1999) *Marketing Places Europe: Attracting Investments, Industries and Visitors to European Cities, Communities, Regions and Nations*. London, UK: Pearson Education Ltd.

Kotler, P., Haider, D. and Rein, I. (1993) *Marketing Places: Attracting Investment, Industry, and Tourism to Cities, States and Nations*. New York, USA: The Free Press.

Kotler, P., Hamlin, M.A., Rein, I. and Haider D.H. (2002) *Marketing Asian Places*. Singapore: John Wiley & Sons.

Krippendorff, K. (2003) Content Analysis: An Introduction to its Methodology. Thousand Oaks, UK: Sage Publications.

Kunzmann, K. (2000) Strategic spatial development through information and communication, in: W. Salet and A. Faludi (Eds.) *The Revival of Strategic Spatial Planning*. Amsterdam, The Netherlands: Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences, pp. 259–265.

Kunzmann, K. (2001) State planning: A German success story? *International Planning Studies,* 6(2): 153-166.

Kvale, S. and Brinkmann, S. (2009) *Interviews: Learning the Craft Qualitative Research Interviewing*. (2nd edition) Los Angles, USA: Sage Publications.

Lambert-Pennington, K. Westendorff, D. and Reardon, K. (2011) Planning under the lion's paw: a Bluff City tale, paper presented at ACSP Congress, Salt Lake City, USA, 13-16 October.

Lamour, C. (2014) Territorial reputation beyond state borders? Metropolitan images in European borderlands. *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy*, 10(1): 19-31.

Lennon, M. (2000) The revival of metropolitan planning, in S. Hamnett, R. Freestone (Eds.) *The Australian Metropolis*. Sydney, Australia: Allen and Unwin, pp 149-67.

Leung, D. Law, R. Van Hoof, H. and Buhalis, D. (2013) Social media in tourism and hospitality: a literature review. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, 30(1-2): 3-22.

Lewis, R. B. (1998) ATLAS.ti and NUDIST: a comparative review of two leading qualitative data analysis packages. *Cultural Anthropology Methods*, 10(3): 41-47.

Lloyd, M.G. and Peel, D. (2008) Re-constructing Regional Development and Planning in Scotland and Wales, in J. Bradshaw (Ed.) *Devolution, Regionalism and Regional Development. The UK Experience*, London, UK: Routledge, pp. 166-82.

Loumou, A., Giourga, C., Dimitrakopoulos, P., and Koukoulas, S. (2000) Tourism contribution to agro-ecosystems conservation: The case of Lesbos Island, Greece. *Environmental Management*, 26(4): 363-370.

Lucarelli, A. (2012) Unraveling the complexity of "city brand equity": a three-dimensional framework. *Journal of Place Management and Development,* 5(3): 231-52.

Lucarelli, A. and Berg, P. (2011) City branding: A state-of-the-art review of the research domain. *Journal of Place Management and Development*, 4(1): 9-27.

Lynch, K. (1960), *The Image of the City*. Cambridge, USA: The MIT Press.

Malecki, E. (2004) 'Jockeying for Position: What It Means and Why It Matters to Regional Development Policy When Place Compete'. Regional Studies, 38(9):1101-1120.

Mäntysaloa, R. Jonna K. Kangasojaa, J.K. and Kanninena, V. (2015) The paradox of strategic spatial planning: A theoretical outline with a view on Finland. *Planning Theory & Practice,* 16(2): 169-83.

Martinelli, F. (2005) Introduzione" [Introduction], in La Pianificazione Strategica in Italia e in Europa: Metodologie ed Esiti a Confronto [Strategic planning in Italy and in Europe: methodology and issues to tackle] in F. Martinelli (Ed.) Milano, Italy: Franco Angeli, pp 11-31.

Mastop, H. (1998) National planning: New institutions for integration. Paper for the XII AESOP Congress, Aveiro; copy available from the author, Nijmegen: The Netherlands, Nijmegen School of Management, University of Nijmegen.

Mateo, C.M. and Seisdedos, G. (2010) Branding Madrid: From "Madrid global" to "global Madrid", in: G.J. Ashworth and M. Kavaratzis (Eds.) *Towards Effective Place Brand Management- Branding European Cities and Regions*. Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar Publishing, pp. 69-88.

Matos, A. and Santos, M. (2010) Transport, tourism and technology in Portugal between the late 19th and early 20th centuries. *Journal of History of Science and Technology,* 4(Fall): 62-80.

Maxwell, J.A. (1998) Designing a qualitative study, in L. Bickman and D.J. Rog (Eds.), *Handbook of applied social research methods*. Thousand Oaks, USA: Sage Publications.

McCann, E. (2009) City marketing, in R. Kitchin, and N. Thrift (Eds.), *International encyclopedia of human geography* (2nd Edition). Oxford, UK: Elsevier.

McDougall, G. and Fry, J. (1974) Combining two methods of image measurement: semantic differential and open-end technique. *Journal of Retailing,* 50(4): 53-61.

Medeiros, E. (2011) (Re)defining the Euroregion Concept. *European Planning Studies*, 19(1): 141-58.

Medway, D., Warnaby, G., and Dharni, S. (2011) Demarketing places: Rationales and strategies. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 27(1/2): 124-142.

Metaxas, T. ([2010]2012) Planning, managing and implementing place/city marketing effectively: Review and discussion of the last 25 years. Paper No. 41024 (posted 4) Munich, Germany: Munich Personal RePEc Archive.

Metaxas, T. (2009) Place marketing, strategic planning and competitiveness: The case of Malta. *European Planning Studies*, 17(9): 1357-78.

Metzger, J. (2012) Placing the stakes: the enactment of territorial stakeholders in planning processes. *Environment and Planning A* 45 781-96.

Michalko, M. (2001) *Cracking Creativity*. Berkeley, CA: Ten Speed Press.

Milroy, B.M. (1992) Some thoughts about difference and pluralism. *Planning Theory* 7/8: 33-38.

Mintzberg, H. (1987) Crafting strategy. *Harvard Business Review*, 65(May-June): 66-75.

Mintzberg, H. (1994) *Rise and Fall of Strategic Spatial Planning*. New York, USA: Free Press.

Mintzberg, H. Ahlstrand, B. and Lampel, J. (1998) *Strategy Safari: A Guided Tour Through the Wilds of Strategic Management*. New York, USA: The Free Press.

Mitlin, D. (2008) With and beyond the state: Coproduction as a route to political influence, power and transformation for grassroots organizations. *Environment and Urbanization* 20(2): 339-60.

Moilanen, T. and Rainisto, S. (2009) *How to Brand Nations, Cities and Destinations: A Planning Book for Place Branding*. Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan.

Molainen, T. (2015) Challenges of City Branding; A comparative study of 10 European cities, *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy*, 11(-): 216-225.

Monno, V. (2010) When strategy meets democracy: Exploring the limits of the 'possible' and the value of the 'impossible', in: Cerreta, M. Concilio, G. and Monno, V. (Eds.) *Making Strategies in*

Spatial Planning: Knowledge and Values. Dordrecht, the Netherlands: Springer Science + Business Media B.V, pp.161-83.

Morgan, N., Pritchard, A. and Piggott, R. (2003) Destination branding and the role of the stakeholders: the case of New Zealand. *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, 9(3): 285-299.

Morgan, N., Pritchard, A. and Pride, R. (Eds.) (2011) *Destination branding: Managing Place Reputation.* Oxford, UK: Butterworth-Heinemann.

Moulaert, F. (2011) When solidarity boosts strategic planning, in: S. Oosterlynck , J. Van den Broeck, L. Albrechts, F. Moulaert and A. Verhetsel (Eds) *Strategic Spatial Projects: Catalysts for Change*, Abingdon: Routledge, (RTPI Library Series): 79-84.

Mourato, J. M. (2011) *Europeanisation and Territorial Governance: An Inquiry Into Power and Institutional Culture Change in Portugal*, Unpublished Doctoral Thesis, London, UK: University College London. Retrieved June 15, 2015 from http://discovery.ucl.ac.uk/1334588/.

Moutinho, L., Rate, S. and Ballantyne, R. (2013) Future cast: an exploration of key emerging megatrends in the tourism arena, in: C. Costa, E. Panyik, and Buhalis, D. (Eds.) *Trends in European Tourism Planning and Organisation*. Bristol, UK: Channel View Publications, pp. 313-25.

Munar, A. (2011) Tourist-created content: rethinking destination branding. *International Journal of Culture, Tourism and Hospitality Research*, 5(3): 291-305.

Munar, A., Gyimóthy, S. and Cai, L. (2013) Tourism social media: a new research agenda, in: Ana María M, Szilvia G, and Liping C (Eds.) *Tourism Social Media: Transformations in Identity, Community and Culture, Tourism Social Science Series*, 19. Bingley, UK: Emerald Publishing, pp. 1-15.

Muñiz-Martínez, N. and Cervantes-Blanco, M. (2009) Identity and marketing of cities, in: M. Gascó-Hernandez and T. Torres-Coronas (Eds.) *Information Communication Technologies and City Marketing: Digital Opportunities for Cities Around the World.* New York, USA: Information Science Reference, pp. 1-25.

Munro, J. and Richards, B. (2011) Destination brand challenges: the digital challenge, in: Y. Wang, and A. Pizam, (Eds.) *Destination Marketing and Management, Theories and Applications.* Oxfordshire, UK: CAB International, pp. 141-54.

Neuman, M. (1996) Images as institution builders: metropolitan planning in Madrid. *European Planning Studies*, 4(3): 293-312.

Neuman, W. L. (2011) Social Research Methods: Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches. Boston, MA: Pearson.

Newman, P. (2008) Strategic spatial planning: collective action on and moments of opportunity, *European Planning Studies*, 16(10): 1371-1383.

Nobili, V. (2005) The role of European capital of culture events within Genoa's and Liverpool's branding and positioning efforts. *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy*, 1(3): 316-28.

North, S. (2013a) *The power of social media for nation branding.* Retrieved December 1, 2013 from http://placesbrands.com/the-power-of-social-media-for-nation-branding/

North, S. (2013b) *Swedish Rogues: daring nation branding on Twitter.* Retrieved December 1, 2013 from http://placesbrands.com/swedish-rogues-daring-nation-branding-on-Twitter/

Ntounis, N.-F., Parker, C. and Benni, D. (2014) What Does Place Marketing Mean in Practice? A Preliminary Content Analysis of North West England Place-Related Websites, AM paper.

Nuttavuthisit, K. (2007) Branding Thailand: correcting the negative image of sex tourism. *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy*, 3(1): 21-30.

Nykiel, R. and Jascolt, E. (2008) *Marketing Your City, U.S.A: A Guide to Developing a Strategic Tourism Marketing Plan*. Binghamton, UK: Haworth Press.

O'Leary, S. and Deegan, J. (2003) People, pace, place: qualitative and quantitative images of Ireland as a tourism destination in France. *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, 9(3): 213-226.

O'Neill, S. (2013) In a Q&A, *Tourism Australia reveals the secrets of its Facebook dominance*. Retrieved December 4, 2013 from http://www.tnooz.com/article/in-a-qa-tourismaustralia-reveals-the-secrets-of-its-Facebook-dominance/

OECD - The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2012a) *Public Investment across Levels of Government: The Case of Galicia, Spain*. Retrieved March 7, 2014 from http://www.oecd.org/gov/regional-policy/galicia_edited.pdf

OECD - The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2012b). *OECD Economic Surveys: Portugal*. Retrieved March 10, 2013, from http://www.oecd.org/eco/surveys/PORTUGAL_2012_ Overview.pdf

OECD - The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2013) *Regions and Innovation: Collaborating across Borders, OECD Reviews of Regional Innovation*, Retrieved September 30, 2015 from http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264205307-en

OECD - The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2014a). *OECD Country statistical profile: Portugal 2014*. Retrieved September 19, 2013, from http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/economics/country-statistical-profile-portugal-2014-1_csp-prt-table-2014-1-en

OECD - The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2014b) *OECD Economic Outlook: Statistics and Projections*, Retrieved September 30, 2015 from http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/economics/data/oecd-economic-outlook-statistics-and-projections_eo-data-en

OECD - The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2014c) *OECD Regional Outlook 2014 Regions and Cities: Where Policies and People Meet*, Retrieved September 30, 2015 from http://www.oecd.org/regional/oecd-regional-outlook-2014-9789264201415-en.htm

OECD - The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2015a) *OECD Skills Strategy Diagnostic Report Portugal* Retrieved September 30, 2015 from http://skills.oecd.org/developskills/documents/Portugal-Diagnostic-Report-web.pdf

OECD - The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2015b) *OECD Country statistical profile: Portugal 2015* Retrieved November 2, 2015 from http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/content/table/20752288-table-prt

Ogilvy, J. (2002) *Creating Better Futures*. New York, USA: Oxford University Press.

Olesen, K. (2011) *Strategic Spatial Planning in Transition: a Case Study of Denmark*. Unpublished Doctoral Thesis. Aalborg, Denmark: Department of Development and Planning, Aalborg University. Retrieved September 28, 2015 from http://vbn.aau.dk/ws/files/56082656/Strategic_spatial_planning_in_transition_Olesen_2011.pdf

Olesen, K. (2014) The neoliberalisation of strategic spatial planning. *Planning Theory*, 13(3): 288-303.

Olesen, K. and Richardson, T. (2012) Strategic Planning in Transition: Contested Rationalities and Spatial Logics in Twenty-First Century Danish Planning Experiments. *European Planning Studies*, 20(10): 1689-1706.

Oliveira, (2011) *Territories, Brands and Competitiveness: The Minho region and its international promotion [Territórios, marcas e competitividade: a região Minho e a sua projecção internacional].* Unpublished Master Thesis, Braga, Portugal, University of Minho. Retrieved August 14, 2015 from http://hdl.handle.net/1822/12237

Oliveira, E. (2013a) The digital challenge in destination branding: brief approach to the Portuguese case (Extended version of the abstract). In *International Tourism Week Conference Series V - New Trends in Tourism Management and Marketing* (pp. 9-14). Akdeniz University, Antalya, Turkey: Ozge Matba ve Tasarim.

Oliveira, E. (2013b). *To shout or to hashtag? Digital challenges in destination branding.* Retrieved January 18, 2014, from http://placesbrands.com/to-shout-or-to-hashtag-digital-challenges-in-destination-branding/#sthash.syp7ARAZ.dpuf

Oliveira, E. (2013c) Making strategies in destination branding: what is the online tourism promotional material saying about Portugal? In International Conference on Sustainable Issues and Challenges in Tourism (pp. 9-15). Boğaziçi University, Istanbul, Turkey: Boğaziçi University Printhouse.

Oliveira, E. (2014a) The Tourism Potential of Northern Portugal and Its Relevance for a Regional Branding Strategy. *Advances in Hospitality and Tourism Research Journal*, 2(2): 54-78.

Oliveira, E. (2014b) A Strategic Spatial Planning Approach to Cross-Border Place Branding with references to Galicia and Northern Portugal. In Conference on Interregional Place Branding, Industrie- und Handelskammer zu Lübeck, Lübeck.

Oliveira, E. (2014c): Book Review - Making Strategies in Spatial Planning-Knowledge and Values. *European Planning Studies*, 22(4): 885-888

Oliveira, E. (2014d). Book Review - Reframing the 'creative city' through tailored and context-sensitive policies. *Journal CITY: analysis of urban trends, culture, theory, policy, action,* 18(4/5): 598-602.

Oliveira, E. (2015a) Place branding as a strategic spatial planning instrument. *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy*, 11(1): 18-33.

Oliveira, E. (2015b) Place Branding in Strategic Spatial Planning: A Content Analysis of Development Plans, Strategic Initiatives and Policy Documents for Portugal 2014-2020, *Journal of Place Management and Development*, 8(1): 23-50.

Oliveira, E. (2015c) Constructing Regional Advantage in branding the cross-border Euroregion Galicia-northern Portugal. *Regional Studies, Regional Science*, 2(1): 340-48.

Oliveira, E. (2015d) *Beyond the 'logo-fetish' – place branding event.* Retrieved June 15, 2015 from http://placesbrands.com/place-branding-event-ipm/

Oliveira, E. (2015e) A Strategic Spatial Planning Approach to Cross-Border Place Branding with references to Galicia and Northern Portugal, in: S. Zenker and B.P. Jacobsen (Eds.) *Inter-regional place branding: best practices, challenges and solutions*, Cham, Switzerland: Springer International Publishing, pp. 115-137.

Oliveira, E. (2015f) Book Review - Good Cities, Better Places, *Journal Urban Studies,* 52(1): 197-200.

Oliveira, E. (2015g) *Building cross-border uniqueness: Galicia-North Portugal from shared roots to a joint branding strategy.* Retrieved October 15, 2015 from http://magazine.limburgcrossborders.com/en/magazine/9960/788145/galicia-northern_portugal.html

Oliveira, E. and Panyik, E. (2015) Content, Context and Co-creation: Digital Challenges in Destination Branding with References to Portugal as a Tourist Destination. *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, 21(1): 53-74.

Oosterlynck, S., Van den Broeck, J. Albrechts, L., Moulaert, F., Verhetsel, A. (Eds.) (2011) *Strategic Spatial Projects: Catalysts for change.* Abingdon: Routledge (RTPI Library Series).

Oppermann, M. (1997). *Pacific Rim tourism.* New York, USA: CABI.

Orlikowski W. J. and Baroudi J.J. (1991) Studying information technology in organizations: research approaches and assumptions. *Information Systems Research*, 2(1): 1-28.

Orlikowski, W.J. and Baroudi, J.J. (1991) Studying Information Technology in Organizations: Research Approaches and Assumptions, *Information Systems Research* (2): 1-28.

Ostrom, E. (1990) *Governing the Commons: The Evolution of Institutions for Collective Action.* New York, USA: Cambridge University Press.

Paasi, A. and Zimmerbauer, K. (2011) Theory and practice of the region: A contextual analysis of the transformation of Finnish regions. *Treballs de la Societat Catalana de Geografia*, March (71/72): 163-178.

Page, S. (2009) *Tourism Management. An Introduction.* 4th Edition. Oxford, UK: Elsevier Ltd.

Pan, B., MacLaurin, T. and Crott, J.C. (2007) Travel blogs and the implication for destination marketing. *Journal of Travel Research*, 46(1): 35-45.

Pareja-Eastway, M., Chapain, C. and Mugnano, S. (2013) Success and failures in city branding policies, in: S. Musterd and Z. Kovács (Eds.) *Place-making and Policies for Competitive Cities.* Chichester, UK: Wiley-Blackwell, pp. 150-171.

Pascual, I. and Esteve, J. (1997) La Estrategia de las Ciudades. Planes Estrategicos como Instrumento: Metodos, Tecnicas y Buenas Practicas [The strategy of cities. Strategic plans as instrument: methods, techniques and good practices] Barcelona, Spain: Diputacion de Barcelona.

Pasqui, G. (2011) The changing urban agenda, in: A. Balducci, V. Fedeli and G. Pasqui (Eds.) *Strategic Planning for Contemporary Urban Regions: City of Cities: A Project for Milan.* Surrey, UK: Ashgate Publishing, pp. 55-65.

Pasquinelli, C. (2010) The limits of place branding for local development: The case of Tuscany and the Arno valley brand. *Local Economy*, 25(7), 558-572.

Pasquinelli, C. (2011/2012) Competition, Cooperation, Co-opetition. Widening the perspective on Place Branding. Unpublished Doctoral Thesis, Pisa, Italy, University of Pisa, Scuola Superiore Sant'Anna Retrieved August 29, 2015 from http://www.phdmanagement.sssup.it/documenti/awarded/pasquinelli_thesis.pdf

Pasquinelli, C. (2013) Competition, Cooperation, Co-opetition. Unfolding the process of inter territorial branding. *Urban Research and Practice*, 6(1): 1-18.

Pasquinelli, C. (2014) Branding as Urban Collective Strategy-making: The Formation of NewcastleGateshead's Organisational Identity. *Urban Studies,* 51(4): 727-43.

Pasquinelli, C. and Teräs, J. (2013) Branding Knowledge-intensive Regions: A Comparative Study of Pisa and Oulu High-Tech Brands, *European Planning Studies*, 21(10): 1611–1629.

Paul, D.E. (2004) World cities as hegemonic projects: The politics of global Imagineering in Montreal. *Political Geography,* 23(5): 571-596.

Pedersen, S. (2004) Place branding: giving the region of Øresund a competitive edge. *Journal of Urban Technology*, 11(1): 77–95.

Pellenbarg, P. H. and Meester, W. J. (2009) Regional marketing to change regional images: the example of the Groningen province campaign. *European Spatial Research and Policy*, 16(1): 23-39.

Perkmann, M. (2003) Cross-Border Regions in Europe: Significance and Drivers of Regional Cross-Border Co-Operation. *European Urban and Regional Studies*, 10(2): 153-171.

Pike, A. (2009) Geographies of brands and branding. *Progress in Human Geography*, 33(5): 619-45.

Pike, A. (2011a) Conclusions: Brands and branding geographies, in: A. Pike (Ed.), *Brands and branding geographies*. (1st edition), Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar.

Pike, A. (2011b) Placing Brands and Branding: A socio-spatial biography of Newcastle Brown Ale. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 36(2): 206-222.

Pike, A. (2013) Economic geographies of Brands and Branding, *Economic Geography*, 89(4): 317-39.

Pike, S. (2002) Destination image analysis-a review of 142 papers from 1973 to 2000. *Tourism Management*, 23(2): 541–549.

Pina P. (1988) *O Turismo no seculo XX*. Lisbon, Portugal: Lucidos.

Poister, T. and Streib, G. (1999) Strategic management in the public sector: Concepts, models and processes. *Public Productivity and Management Review*, 22(3): 308-25.

Pritchard, A. and Morgan, N. (1998) Mood Marketing-The new destination branding strategy: a case study of "Wales," the brand. *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, 4(3): 215-29.

Pudliner B. A. (2007) Alternative literature and tourist experience: travel and tourists weblogs. *Journal of Tourism and Cultural Change*, 5(1): 46-59.

Purcell, M. (2009) Resisting neoliberalization: communicative planning or counter-hegemonic movements?" *Planning Theory,* 8(2): 140-65.

Quinn, J. (1980) *Strategies for Change: Logical Incrementalism*. Illinois, USA: Dow Jones-Irwin.

Rainisto, S. (2003) *Success factors of place marketing: A study of place marketing practices in Northern Europe and the United States*. Doctoral Thesis, Helsinki University of Technology, Institute of Strategy and International Business, Helsinki, Retrieved August 5, 2013 from https://aaltodoc.aalto.fi/bitstream/handle/123456789/2106/isbn9512266849.pdf?sequence=1.

Rantisi, N. and Leslie, D. (2006) Branding the design metropole: The case of Montreal, Canada. *Area,* 38(4): 364-76.

Reilly, M. (1990) Free elicitation of descriptive adjectives for tourism image assessment. *Journal of Travel Research,* 28(4): 21-6.

Riley, R. (1996) Revealing socially constructed knowledge through quasi-structured interviews and grounded theory analysis. *Journal of Travel and Tourism Marketing*, 5(1/2): 21-40.

Riley, R. and Love, L. (2000) The state of qualitative tourism research. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 27(1): 164-87.

Rizzi, P. and Dioli, I. (2010) From Strategic Planning to City Branding: Some Empirical Evidence in Italy. *Journal of Tourism and Cultural Heritage* 8(Special Issue): 39-49.

Rodríguez-Pose, A. (2001) Local production systems and economic performance in Britain, France, Germany, and Italy. in: Crouch, Colin, Le Galés, Patrick, Trigilia, Carlo and Voelzkow, Helmut, (eds.) *Local Production Systems in Europe: Rise or Demise?* Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, pp. 25-45.

Roig, A., Pritchard, A. and Morgan, N. (2010) Place-making or place branding? Case studies of Catalonia and Wales. in: G.J. Ashworth and M. Kavaratzis (Eds.) *Towards Effective Place Brand Management –Branding European Cities and Regions*. Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar Publishing Limited, pp. 116-135.

Rosa Pires, A. (2005) The Fragile Foundations of European Spatial Planning in Portugal, *European Planning Studies*, 13(2): 237–53.

Roy, A. (2010) *Poverty Capital*. New York, USA: Routledge.

Rumford, C. (2006) Introduction: Theorizing borders. *European Journal of Social Theory*, 9(2): 155-69.

Sager, T. (2013) *Reviving Critical Planning Theory*. New York, USA: Routledge.

Saija, L. (2011) The US empowerment planning approach meets Sicilian community planning. The community mapping initiative in the Simeto Valley (Sicily, Italy), paper presented at ACSP Congress, Salt Lake City 13–16 October.

Salet, W. and Faludi, A. (2000). *The Revival of Strategic Spatial Planning*. Amsterdam, The Netherlands: Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences.

Sandercock, L. (1998) *Towards Cosmopolis: Planning for Multicultural* Cities. Chichester, Sussex, UK: John Wiley and Sons.

Sartorio, F. (2005) Strategic Spatial Planning: A Historical Review of Approaches, Its Recent Revival and an Overview of the State of the Art in Italy. *disP - The Planning Review*, 41(162): 26-40.

Schön, D. A. (1971) *Beyond the Stable State*. New York, London: Norton & Co.

Schwandt, T. A. (2001) Dictionary of Qualitative Inquiry, 2nd Edition, London. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Seisdedos, G. (2015) Oman National Spatial Strategy, in Best Place Institute/European Place Marketing Institute (2015) *Place Marketing & Branding 2015+*. Retrieved September 27, 2015, from http://bestplaceinstytut.org/RAPORT2015.pdf

Sevin, E. (2014) Understanding cities through city brands: City branding as a social and semantic network. *Cities*, 38(June): 47-56.

Sevin, E. (2016) Branding Cities in the Age of Social Media: A Comparative Assessment of Local Government Performance, in: M. Z. Sobaci (Ed) *Social Media and Local Governments - Theory and Practice*. Cham, Switzerland: Springer International Publishing, pp. 301-320.

Sigala, M. (2011) Special issue on Web 2.0 in travel and tourism: Empowering and changing the role of travelers. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 27(2): 607-08.

Singh, N., Hu, C. and Roehl, W. (2007) Text mining a decade of progress in hospitality human resource management research: identifying emerging thematic development. *Hospitality Management*, 26(1): 131-47.

Skinner, H. (2008) The emergence and development of place marketing's confused identity", *Journal of Marketing Management*, 24(9/10): 915-28.

Storper, M. and Scott, A.J. (1988) The geographical foundations and social regulation of flexible production complexes, in: J. Wolch and M. Dear (Eds.) *The Power of Geography*. Boston, MA: Allen & Unwin.

Stubbs, J. and Warnaby, G. (2015) Rethinking Place Branding from a Practice Perspective: Working with Stakeholders, in: M. Kavaratzis, G. Warnaby, and G.J. Ashworth (Eds.) *Rethinking Place Branding Comprehensive Brand Development for Cities and Regions*, Cham, Switzerland: Springer International Publishing, pp. 101-118.

Syssner, J. (2010) Place branding from a multi-level perspective a multi-level perspective. *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy*, 6(1): 36-48.

Tasci, A. and Kozak, M. (2006) Destination brands vs. destination images: do we know what we mean? *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, 12(4): 299-317.

Therkelsen, A. (2015) Rethinking Place Brand Communication: From Product-Oriented Monologue to Consumer-Engaging Dialogue, in: M. Kavaratzis, G. Warnaby, and G. J. Ashworth (Eds) *Rethinking Place Branding Comprehensive Brand Development for Cities and Regions*. Cham, Switzerland: Springer International Publishing, pp. 159-174.

Therkelsen, A., Halkier, H. and Jensen, B. (2010) Branding Aalborg: Building community or selling place?, in: G. Ashworth and M. Kavaratzis (Eds.) *Towards Effective Place Brand Management Branding European Cities and Regions*. Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar Publishing, pp. 136-155.

Throgmorton, J. (1996) *Planning as Persuasive Storytelling: The Rhetorical Construction of Chicago's Electric Future*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Tödtling, F. and Trippl, M. (2005) One size fits all? Towards a differentiated regional innovation policy approach. *Research Policy*, 34(8): 1203-19.

Tourism of Portugal (2012) *National Strategic Plan for Tourism 2013-2015/Plano Estratégico Nacional do Turismo Horizonte 2013-2015*. Retrieved January 17, 2013, from http://www.turismodeportugal.pt/Portugu%C3%AAs/turismodeportugal/publicacoes/Documents/PENT%202012.pdf

Travel Daily News (2013) *Travel Daily News*. Retrieved December 1, 2013, from http://www.traveldailynews.com/

Trueman, M., Klemm, M. and Giroud, A. (2004) Can a city communicate? Bradford as a corporate brand. *Corporate Communications: An International Journal*, 9(4): 317-30.

Tussyadiah, I.P. and Fesenmaier, D.R. (2008) Marketing places through first-person stories: an analysis of Pennsylvania road tripper blog. *Journal of Travel and Tourism Marketing*, 25(3-4): 299-311.

UNWTO - United Nations World Tourism Organization (2014). *UNWTO Tourism Highlights, 2014 Edition*. Retrieved July 28, 2014, from http://mkt.unwto.org/ publication/unwto-tourism-highlights-2014-edition

Van Assche, K. and Djanibekov, N. (2012) Spatial planning as policy integration: The need for an evolutionary perspective lessons from Uzbekistan. *Land Use Policy*, 29(1): 179-186.

Van Assche, K. and Lo, M. (2011) Planning, preservation and place branding: A tale of sharing assets and narratives. *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy*, 7(2): 116-126.

Van Assche, K., Beunen, R., Duineveld, M. and De Jong, H. (2012) Co-evolutions of planning and design: Risks and benefits of design perspectives in planning systems. *Planning Theory*, 12(2): 177-198.

Van Assche, K., Beunen, R., Duineveld, M. (Eds.) (2014) *Evolutionary Governance Theory: An Introduction*. Cham, Switzerland: Springer International Publishing.

Van den Berg, L. and Braun, E. (1999) Urban competitiveness, marketing and the need for organising capacity. *Urban Studies*, 36(5/6): 987-99.

Van Dijk, P. and Holstein, A. N. (2007) How to brand a neighbourhood? Innovative citizen participation in urban planning, in: G. Amos, and D. Warburton (Eds.) *Community Engagement in Planning–Exploring the Way Forward Final Report EU INTERREG IIIB Project*. Brussels, Belgium: APaNGO Project Partners.

Van Ham, P. (2002) Branding territory: Inside the wonderful worlds of PR and IR theory. *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, 31(2): 249-269.

Van Ham, P. (2008) Place branding: the state of the art. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 616(1): 126-49.

Vicari Haddock, S. (2010) Branding the creative city, in Vicari Haddock, S. (Ed.) *Brand Building: The Creative City*, Florence, Italy: Firenze University Press, pp. 17-37.

Vigar, G. (2009) Towards an Integrated Spatial Planning? European Planning Studies, 17(11): 1571-90.

Volo, S. (2009) Conceptualizing experience: a tourist based approach. *Journal of Hospitality Marketing and Management,* 18(2-3): 111-126.

Volo, S. (2010) Bloggers' reported tourist experiences: their utility as a tourism data source and their effect on prospective tourists. *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, 16(4): 297-311.

VROM, LNV, VenW, EZ (2006) Nota Ruimte. Ruinte voor ontiwkkeling. Deel 4: tekst na parlamentaire instemming. Den Haag: Ministries of VROM, LNV, VenW, EZ.

Wang, N. (1999) Rethinking authenticity in tourism experience. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 26(2): 349-70.

Wang, Y., Yu, Q. and Fesenmaier, D. (2002) Defining virtual tourist community: implications for tourism marketing. *Tourism Management*, 23(4): 407-17.

Ward, K. (2000) Front rentiers to rantiers: "Active entrepreneurs", "structural speculators' and the "politics of marketing". *Urban Studies*, 37(7): 1093-1107.

Warnaby, G. and Medway, D. (2013) What about the "place" in place marketing? *Marketing Theory*, 13(3): 345-363.

Warnaby, G., Ashworth, G.J. and Kavaratzis, M. (2015) Sketching Futures for Place Branding, in: M. Kavaratzis, G. Warnaby, and G. J. Ashworth (Eds.) *Rethinking Place Branding Comprehensive Brand Development for Cities and Regions*. Cham, Switzerland: Springer International Publishing, pp. 241-248.

Warnaby, G., Bennison, D. and Davies, J.B. (2005) Marketing Town Centers: Retailing and Town Centre Management. *Local Economy*, 20(2): 183-204.

Way, H. and Scoble, R. (2013) *12 apps to help you become a smarter traveller.* Retrieved December 1, 2013 from http://thenextweb.com/apps/2013/10/28/12-apps-help-smarter-traveler/

Wenger, A. (2007) Analysis of travel bloggers' characteristics and their communication about Austria as a tourism destination. *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, 14(2): 169-176.

Whitaker, G. (1980) Coproduction: citizen participation in service delivery. *Public Administration Review,* 40(3): 240-46.

Wiechmann, T. (2007) Planning and adaptation – Strategising in complex contexts as dealing with social paradoxes. Written Paper, International Conference New Concepts and Approaches for Urban and Regional Policy and Planning, Belgian: University of Leuven.

Wilkinson, P. (2007) Community destination management in developing economies. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 34(2): 549-550.

Williams, M. (2000) Interpretivism and Generalisation. *Sociology,* 34(2): 209-24.

Woltjer, J. (2004) Consensus planning in infrastructure and environmental development, in: G. Linden and H. Voogd (Eds.) *Environmental and Infrastructure Planning*. Groningen, The Netherlands: GeoPress, pp. 37-58.

Woodside, G.A., Cruickshank, F.B. and Dehuang, N. (2007) Stories visitors tell about Italian cities as destination icons. *Tourism Management*, 28(1): 162-74.

World Economic Forum (2013). *The Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Report 2013*. Retrieved March 10, 2013, from http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_TT Competitiveness_Report_2013.pdf

World Economic Forum (2015) *These countries are shrinking the fastest*. Retrieved August 16, 2015, from https://agenda.weforum.org/2015/07/these-countries-are-shrinking-the-fastest/?utm_content=buffer809cd&utm_medium=social&utm_source=facebook.com&utm_campaign=buffer

WTTC - The World Travel and Tourism Council (2012) *World Travel & Tourism Economic Impact 2012*. Retrieved March 10, 2013, from http://www.wttc.org/site_media/uploads/downloads/portugal2012.pdf

WTTC - The World Travel and Tourism Council (2012). *World Travel & Tourism Economic Impact 2012*. Retrieved March 10, 2013, from http://www.wttc.org/site_media/uploads/downloads/portugal2012.pdf

Xunta de Galicia (2013) *Statistic yearbook Galicia-northern Portugal 2012*. Retrieved April 16, 2015, from http://www.gnpaect.eu/en/euroregion/statistic-yearbook

Ye, Q., Law, R., Guc, B., Chen, W. (2011) The influence of user-generated content on traveler behavior: An empirical investigation on the effects of e-word of-mouth to hotel online bookings. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 27(2): 634-639.

Yeoman, I. and McMahon-Beatie, U. (2011) Destination brand challenges: the future challenge, in: Y. Wang, and A. Pizam (Eds.) *Destination Marketing and Management, Theories and Applications*. Oxfordshire, UK: CAB International, pp. 169-182.

Yin, R.K. (2003) *Case study research: Design and methods*, Thousand Oaks, USA: Sage Publications.

Yndigegn, C. (2013). Reviving Unfamiliarity-The Case of Public Resistance to the Establishment of the Danish–German Euroregion. *European Planning Studies*, 21(1): 58-74.

Yoo, H. and Gretzel, U. (2008) What motivates consumers to write online travel reviews? *Information Technology and Tourism*, 10(4): 283-95.

Young, M. (1999) The Social Construction of Tourist Places. *Australian Geographer*, 30(3): 373-389.

Yuksel, F., Bramwell, B., and Yuksel, A. (1999). Stakeholder interviews and tourism planning at Pamukkale, Turkey. *Tourism Management*, *20*(3), 351-360.

Zavattaro, S. and Adams, F. (2015) Bridging the gap: An exploration of how DMO managers use education to overcome challenges. *Urban Studies*, Published online before print: 1-20.

Zavattaro, S. M., Daspit, J.J. and Adams F. G. (2015) Assessing managerial methods for evaluating place brand equity: A qualitative investigation, *Journal Tourism Management*, 47 (April): 11–21.

Zenker, S. (2011) How to catch a city? The concept and measurement of place brands. Journal of Place Management and Development, 4(1): 40-52.

Zenker, S. (2014) Measuring place brand equity with the advanced Brand Concept Map (aBCM) method. *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy,* 10(2): 158-66.

Zenker, S. and Braun, E. (2010) The Place Brand Culture – A Conceptual Approach for the Brand Culture. Proceedings of the 39th European Marketing Academy Conference, Copenhagen, Denmark, 1-4 June.

Zenker, S. and Erfgen, C. (2014) Let them do the work: a participatory place branding approach. *Journal of Place Management and Development* , 7(3): 225-34.

Zenker, S. and Jacobsen, B. P. (Eds.) (2015) Introduction to Interregional Place Branding, in: S. Zenker and B.P. Jacobsen (Eds.) *Inter-regional place branding: best practices, challenges and solutions*, Cham, Switzerland: Springer International Publishing, pp. 115-37.

Zenker, S. and Rütter, N. (2014) Is satisfaction the key? The role of citizen satisfaction, place attachment and place brand attitude on positive citizenship behavior. *Cities* 38(June): 11–17.

Zimmerbauer, K. (2011) From image to identity: building regions by place promotion, *European Planning Studies*, 19(2): 243-60.

Zull, C. and Landmann, J. (2004) Computer-assisted Content Analysis without Dictionary? Sixth International Conference on Logic and Methodology (RC33). Recent Developments and Applications in Social Research Methodology. Amsterdam, The Netherlands: International Sociological Association.

Acknowledgements

Appendix A. List of online information/knowledge sharing platforms, such as blogs and twitter feeds devoting attention to the topic of place branding, place marketing and place management.

Name*	Electronic address	Type	Editor
Brandocracy	https://twitter.com/brandocracy	Twitter	-
City Nation Place	https://twitter.com/citynationplace	Twitter	Hubbub
	http://www.citynationplace.com/	Blog	Ltd.
CityBranding	https://twitter.com/BrandCity	Twitter	-
	http://citybranding.ru/	Blog	
Country Branding	https://twitter.com/CountryBranding	Twitter	-
Destination Brands	https://twitter.com/DestinaBrands	Twitter	-
	http://destinationbrands.net/	Blog	
Envisioning better futures	http://envisioningbetterfutures.blogspot.nl/	Blog	Eduardo
			Oliveira
Institute of Place Management	https://twitter.com/PlaceManagement	Twitter	Cathy
	http://www.placemanagement.org/	Blog	Parker
Nation Branding	https://twitter.com/EastWestComs	Twitter	-
	http://www.eastwestcoms.com/	Blog	
Nation Branding	https://twitter.com/_NationBranding	Twitter	-
	http://nation-branding.info/	Blog	
Nation Branding Lab	https://twitter.com/nationlab	Twitter	-
	http://nationbrandinglab.com/	Blog	
Nouveau North	https://twitter.com/nouveaunorth	Twitter	-
	http://www.nouveaunorth.com/#home	Blog	
Place Brand	https://twitter.com/GoPlaceBrand	Twitter	-
Place Brand Observer	http://placebrandobserver.com/	Twitter	Florian
	https://twitter.com/PlaceBrandOBS	Blog	Kaefer
Place Branding Factory	https://twitter.com/PBF4	Twitter	-
	http://www.placebrandingfactory.com/	Blog	
Place Marketing	https://twitter.com/PlaceMarketing	Twitter	-
	http://www.placemarketing.net/	Blog	
Places For Us	https://twitter.com/Places_for_us	Twitter	Various
	http://www.placesforus.com.br/		
Placesbrands	https://twitter.com/placesbrands	Twitter	Samantha
	http://placesbrands.com/	Blog	North
Proximity Tourism	https://twitter.com/TourIdentities	Twitter	Jelmer
			Jeuring
So Place	https://twitter.com/SoPlacers	Twitter	-
Thinking Place	https://twitter.com/thinking_place	Twitter	-

Source: Own elaboration *In alphabetical order

Appendix B. Interview guide used during the in-depth interviewing with the regional actors.

I: Strategic territorial diagnosis of northern Portugal (NUT II)
01: What are the key economic, social and political constraints and limitations of northern Portugal?
02: What is the nature of those key issues / problems/weaknesses, structural or cyclical?
03: Bearing in mind the economic, social and cultural diversity, how do you characterize the image of the region?
04: In your opinion, is the northern Portugal image damaging the regional attractiveness at the national (inside) and international (outside) levels?
05. How do you perceive or expect the future of northern Portugal (strengths/potential and solutions/improvements / visions for the future)?
II: Place branding at the regional scale
06: In your opinion, is there any place brand for Portugal (nation brand) and for its northern region (region brand)? If yes, what is the nature of those place brands?
07: What are the key strategic domains of northern Portugal?
08: What are the key distinctive elements (tangible/intangible material/symbolic) of northern Portugal that should be integrated into a place (region) branding strategy?
09: In your opinion, a region branding strategy for northern Portugal would be able to enhance regional attractiveness, reimagine and reposition the region nationally and internationally?
10: Which entity could be able to plan and manage a region brand for northern Portugal?
III: Strategic spatial planning at the national (Portugal) and regional (northern region)
11: What are the current main strategic spatial planning instruments, development plans, strategic initiatives and policy documents for Portugal and its northern region for the period between 2014 and 2020?
12: In your opinion, are those spatial plans and documents dynamic, up to date, fair and just?
13: In your opinion, are those spatial plans and documents sufficiently robust to support a regional structural change at the economic and social levels?
14: In your opinion, are those spatial plans and documents able to strengthen the competitive position of the northern region to Portugal and beyond?
15: What are the financial support mechanisms for regional planning and development?
IV: Place branding in strategic spatial planning at the region level
17: In your opinion, can a place (region) brand be integrated as an instrument in strategic spatial planning?
18: In your opinion, can a place (region) branding initiative integrated as an instrument in strategic spatial planning to support regional development and the attainment of strategic goals?
19: What mechanisms (political/financial) can operationalise a place branding strategy for northern Portugal?
V: Participation / regional actors engagement / cross-border cooperation in strategic spatial planning and place branding
20: How do you characterise the cross-border cooperation between northern Portugal and Galicia?
21: Does a cross-border branding strategy for the Euroregion of Galicia-northern Portugal makes any sense? If yes, what would be the role of European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation in that regarding?
22: Would you be able to identify and recommend other key regional actors (civic society and institutions) to be interviewed for the purpose of this study?
23: Is there any other element you would like to raise or question?

Thank you for your cooperation

Appendix C. List of key regional actors of northern Portugal interviewed for the purpose of this Ph.D. thesis between March 2014 and February 2015.

IN*	Key regional actors (civic society and institutions)	Position of interviewee	Location
1	North Regional Coordination and Development Commission (CCDRN)	Director of services for regional development	Porto
2	CCDRN-II	President's Cabinet	Porto
3	Regional Entity of Tourism of Porto and Northern Portugal (TPNP)	Director of services for tourism planning and promotion	Viana do Castelo
4	Regional Development Agency of the Ave Valley (ADRAVE)	Director of services	Vila Nova de Famalicão
5	European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation Galicia-northern Portugal (EGTC-GNP)	Director-general	Porto
6	Health Cluster Portugal (HCP)	Director of studies and planning	(online)
7	Textile and Clothing Association of Portugal (ATP)	Director-general	Vila Nova de Famalicão
8	University of Minho (UM-I)	Vice-rector for Knowledge Enhancement and Special Projects	Braga
9	Department of Economics School of Economics and Management (UM-II)	Professor of Economics	Braga
10	Department of Economics School of Economics and Management (UM-III)	Professor of Economics	Braga
11	Department of Civil Engineering School of Engineering (UM-IV)	Professor of Urban and Regional Planning	Braga
12	Geography Department Social Sciences Institute (UM-V)	Professor of Geography	Guimarães
13	Quaternaire Portugal - Corporate society working on Spatial Planning; Strategic Planning (QP)	Member of the Board of Directors	Matosinhos
14	A member of the business community (transports agency) (TRP)	Director of services	Braga
15	A member of the civic society (CS)	Independent researcher	Braga
16	PortugalFoods (PF)	Executive Director	(online)

*IN stands for interviewee number which has been attributed by the author.

Appendix D. List of key regional actors of northern Portugal which have been contacted for an interview but have not replied the electronic message or have denied* the participation in this study.

IN**	Acronym	English translation	Original name in Portuguese
1	AARN	Artisans Association of Northern Portugal	Associação de Artesãos da Região Norte
2	ACB	Commercial Association of Braga	Associação Comercial de Braga
3	ACISAT	Alto Tâmega Business Association	Associação Empresarial do Alto Tâmega
4	ACP	Commercial Association of Porto	Associação Comercial do Porto
5	AEP	Portuguese Entrepreneurial Association	Associação Empresarial de Portugal
6	AICEP Portugal Global	Trade & Investment Agency	Agência para o Investimento e Comércio Externo de Portugal, E.P.E
7	AIMinho	Business Association of Minho	Associação Empresarial do Minho
8	ANI	National Innovation Agency	Agência Nacional de Inovação, S.A.
9	BICMINHO	Business and Innovation Centre of Minho	Oficina da Inovação – Empreendedorismo e Inovação Empresarial, S.A.
10	CIM do Alto Minho	Alto Minho Intermunicipal Association	Comunidade Intermunicipal do Alto Minho
11	CIM do Ave	Ave Intermunicipal Association	Comunidade Intermunicipal do Ave
12	DGT	Northern Portugal Office of the Directorate General of the Territory	Delegação Regional do Norte da Direção-Geral do Território
13	IAPMEI, I.P.	Agency for Competitiveness and Innovation	Agência para a Competitividade e Inovação
14	Porto Convention	The Porto Convention and Visitors Bureau	Associação de Turismo do Porto e Norte, A.R.
15	UEVM	Vale do Minho Business Confederation	União Empresarial do Vale do Minho
16	UTAD***	Vice-Rector for Planning, Strategy and Organization of the University of Trás-os-Montes and Alto Douro***	Vice-Reitoria para o Planeamento Estratégia e Organização da Universidade de Trás os Montes e Alto Douro***

* Despite several attempts carried out by the author of this thesis to interview the 16 key regional actors listed here, unfortunately they did not reply the emails or did not follow up the phone call requesting for information or a contact person. The author considers to have developed all possible efforts to establish contacts with these regional actors, even by using his network of contacts, however all pressure was fruitless.
** Attributed by the author.
*** This institution/key regional actor has replied the electronic massage but has denied its participation on this study and has recommended to interview CCDRN (Interviewee IN 1 and IN 2, see appendix C, page 240).

Appendix E. List of development plans, strategic initiatives and policy documents for Portugal and its northern region for the period between 2014 and 2020 content analysed.

ID	Title	Entity Responsible	Date Publication	Time frame	Source/Available at:
National level: Portugal					
1	The Programme of the XIX Constitutional Government 2011-2015	Portuguese Government	2011	2011-2015*	http://www.portugal.gov.pt/pt/o-governo/programa-governo/programa-governo.aspx
2	The Road to Growth: A Medium Term-Reform Strategy for Portugal	Portuguese Government	May 2014	2014-2020	http://www.portugal.gov.pt/media/1424212/20140517%20Road%20Growth.pdf
3	Portugal 2020	Portuguese Government	March 2011	2011-2020	http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/nrp/nrp_portugal_pt.pdf
4	National Strategy for Research, Innovation and Smart Specialization 2014-2020	Portuguese Government and Foundation for Science and Technology	**	2014-2020	http://www.fct.pt/esp_inteligente/ http://www.pofc.qren.pt/portugal-2020/especializacao-inteligente
5	National Strategic Reference Framework: Operational Competitiveness Programme	Portuguese Government and COMPETE. COMPETE responsible for managing and implementing the National Strategic Reference Framework.	**	2014-2020	http://www.pofc.qren.pt/portugal-2020/po-competitividade-e-internacionalizacao
6	National Strategic Reference Framework: Clusters and Competitiveness and Technology Poles	Portuguese Government and COMPETE (see information above)	**	2014-2020	http://www.pofc.qren.pt/ResourcesUser/Centro%20Informacao/Biblioteca/Publicacoes/BrochuraPCT.pdf

7	Smart Cities Portugal - A Sustainable and Competitive Network	INTELIi is a non-profit organization aimed at developing smart, sustainable and inclusive territories;	**	**	http://www.inteli.pt/en/go/smart-cities-portugal
8	Portugal Economy Probe - *Probe Portugal*	Portugal Economy Probe	**	**	http://www.peprobe.com/
9	Portugal Global *Choose Portugal* (Portugal Basic Data)	AICEP - Portugal Global - Trade and Investment Agency	March 2014	**	http://www.portugalglobal.pt/en/choose/documents/index.html http://www.portugalglobal.pt/EN/Pages/index_old.aspx
10	Portugal, business by the sea *Portugal, Europe´s West Coast*	AICEP	**	**	http://www.portugalglobal.pt/EN/SourceFromPortugal/Documents/PortugalCostaNegocios_Ingles.pdf
11	Territorial Planning and Urbanism Act (LBPOTU)	Ministry of Environment Spatial Planning and Energy and DG Territory	Law nº. 48/1998, of 11th August Law nº. 54/2007, 31st of August	Modified by Law	http://www.dgterritorio.pt/legislacao/ordenamento_e_cidades/gestao_territorial/lei_de_bases_da_politica_de_ordenamento_do_territorio_e_de_urbanismo__lbpotu_2
12	National Spatial Planning Policy Programme (PNPOT) *Action Programme* and *Report*	Spatial Planning and Energy and DG Territory	Law nº. 58/2007, 4th of September	***	http://www.dgterritorio.pt/ordenamento_e_cidades/ordenamento_do_territorio/pnpot
13	The National Strategic Plan for Tourism (Revised version)	Portuguese Government (Ministry of Economy)	2013	2013-2015	http://www.turismodeportugal.pt/Portugu%C3%AAs/ProTurismo/pol%C3%ADticaseestrat%C3%A9gias/Documents/PENT_04Out_WEB.pdf

Regional level: Northern Portugal					
14	Northern Portugal Operational Programme	CCDRN	February 2014	2014-2020	http://www.ccdrn.pt/fotos/editor2/norte2020/pornorte2020_modelocom_versaodetrabalho.pdf
15	Northern Portugal Smart Specializsation Strategy 2014-2020	CCDRN	May/June 2013	2014-2020	http://www.ccdrn.pt/pt/norte-2020/especializacao-inteligente
Inter-regional level: Euroregion Galicia-northern Portugal					
16	Euro-region 2020 Project 2014-2020	*Eixo Atlántico***** and *Galician Tourism Agency*	**	2014-2020	http://www.eixoatlantico.com/sites/default/files/Proyecto%20Eurorregion%202020_ES_2.pdf
17	Two Countries – One Destination	*Eixo Atlántico*****	**	**	http://www.eixoatlantico.com/sites/default/files/Guia%202014_EN_web_b_1.pdf
18	Joint Investment Programme Galicia-northern Portugal 2014-2020	GNP-EGTC, CCDRN, Xunta Galicia	February 2014	2014-2020	http://www.eixoatlantico.com/documentos/pic2014.pdf http://www.gnpaect.eu/en/euroregion/PIC.pdf/view
Supra-national level: EU and OECD					
19	Portugal: Reforming the state to promote growth	OECD	May 2013	**	http://www.oecd.org/portugal/Portugal%20-%20Reforming%20the%20State%20to%20Promote%20Growth.pdf
20	Europe 2020 Strategy: Portugal-specific recommendations 2014-2020	European Uion European Commission	November 2013	**	http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/csr2014/csr2014_council_portugal_en.pdf

Source: own elaboration based. Notes: *According to the National Elections Commission of Portugal; **Date and/or timeframe are unknown; ***Modified according to new national legislation (ID 12); ****Transnational programme for the northwestern part of the Iberian Peninsula.

EGTC stands for European Grouping for Territorial Cooperation. CCDRN stands for North Regional Coordination and Development Commission; OECD stands for Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.

Summary

This Ph.D. thesis directly scrutinizes the actual or potential roles of place branding as an instrument of the strategic spatial planning approach, specifically at the regional scale. By a thorough exploration of the theoretical links between place branding and strategic spatial planning, the thesis addresses significant gaps in the place-branding literature, contributing to its theoretical refinement and a maturation of its praxis. At the same time, the thesis contributes to the instruments-kit of the strategic spatial planning approach and spatial strategy making; hence, it strengthens the foundations for a renewal of strategic spatial planning.

The thesis investigates the empirical significance of a region-branding initiative, integrated as an instrument within wider strategic spatial planning, by taking one of the five mainland NUTS II-regions of Portugal - the northern region - as a case study. It is the aim of this thesis to contribute to the academic debate and practice of regional branding by discussing its relevance and effectiveness in supporting spatial-economic and social-spatial realignment through the shaping of clearly envisioned, agreed and realistic futures for places, such as regions.

The primary strand of reasoning postulated in this thesis - place branding as a strategic spatial planning instrument - is separate from the corporate branding and marketing approaches to the process of place branding that stills dominate the discourse. This was undertaken without aiming to undervalue the relevance of translating mainstream methods from business and corporate branding to places; instead, it highlighted the value and effectiveness of a more geographical and spatial planning perspective in place branding.

The fields of research that this thesis engages with are gaining particular momentum in a period when place branding has been embraced by place managers and policymakers as a panacea for a bewildering assortment of local economic and social ailments. In addition, strategic spatial planning has been conceived as a means of overcoming the temporal and often spatial limitations of traditional spatial-planning instruments. Moreover, the application of branding procedures and philosophies to districts, cities, countries and, to a lesser extent, to regions and cross-border regions has become an appealing topic for academic research. This has resulted in several theoretical developments as well as methodological contributions to place branding in the form of journal articles, books and reports.

Despite the growing interest in the theory and practice of place branding, several significant gaps and unresolved issues remain to be explored. Notwithstanding the extent of the debate on place branding, it still lacks a conceptual framework to unveil its relationship to spatial-planning strategies. Furthermore, strategic spatial planning literature has seldom discussed place branding or related concepts, as chapters 2 and 3 of this thesis underline. Hence, this thesis reveals critically the links between place branding and strategic spatial planning. Linking place-branding initiatives with spatial planning may also counterpoise the criticisms that charge the practice with being ineffective, neutral regarding the real needs of local communities, favouring more powerful economic and social groups and lacking civic participation and cooperation.

Place branding is thought to facilitate strategic change in places - specifically, through reimagining, repositioning or rescaling processes as well as by supporting endogenous urban and

regional development. Place branding may also be used to support the shaping of a vision for the future of places, as well as to foster economic restructuring, social inclusion and cohesion, political engagement and participation, the reinforcement of place identification and the general long-term well-being of citizens. Place branding as a means of communication between governments and those who are governed can support the communication of place potentials and excellence, thus giving visibility and enhancing national and international recognition.

Place branding is not thought to involve promotional measures alone, but primarily spatial-functional, organizational and financial measures that are meant to improve and change structurally the socio-spatial and spatial-economic conditions of places. A range of possible approaches to place branding can be found in the literature. This Ph.D. thesis advocates a more strategic spatial planning oriented approach to place branding. It is an approach that attempts to support the search for ways of thinking able to contribute to the solving of some unresolved theoretical and empirical issues within place branding. The eighth chapter of this thesis refines this approach, aiming to make place branding more effective; more economically, socially and environmentally responsible; as well as more grounded in the theoretical field of research and practice. The discovery of a new theoretical foundation makes a contribution by rethinking place branding beyond the business context, as well as far beyond the self-regarding fascination of place promotion and/or advertising strategies on which some place managers and politicians rely. This excessive reliance on place logos, taglines and mainstream promotional campaigns have proven to be fruitless for changing the global perceptions of a place, contributing to the well-being of local communities or enabling structural change.

This thesis asserts that place branding and place brands must be primarily oriented towards the support of local businesses, improving infrastructures and providing health and educational services, rather than being focused mainly on attracting investment, tourists and highly qualified workers. For this to happen, this thesis argues that a possible solution is to integrate place branding as an instrument within strategic spatial planning. Chapter 2 reflects critically on the thesis' main research questions - How and why might (and, eventually, should) place branding be taken as an instrument in the strategic spatial planning approach (thus contributing to the improvement of the socio-spatial and spatial-economic conditions), reshaping responses to contemporary challenges faced by places and shape clearly envisioned, agreed, socially responsible and realistic futures for places?

Strategic spatial planning, which takes an integrated approach to the development of a territory, is aiming at overcome the shortcomings of traditional or/and statutory spatial planning. Traditional spatial-planning instruments are mostly concerned with the location, intensity and harmonization of land use and development. However, it has been widely debated whether cities and regions, such as northern Portugal, are faced with a complex range of challenges that can no longer be addressed and managed adequately with only the traditional approach to spatial planning. The strategic spatial planning approach thus emerged as a way to provide a frame of reference for focusing and coordinating the decisions and actions of place actors dealing with spatial changes, by confronting the contemporary social, spatial and economic needs of a place and envisioning better futures.

A vision for a place provides citizens and place actors with views of the future that can be shared, a sense of direction and mobilization around agreed, important matters for spatial development. In addition, strategic spatial planning is thought to be an active force in enabling change as well as helping to change public agendas in an integrative way. As a set of governance practices for developing and implementing strategies, plans, policies and projects, strategic spatial planning is able to encourage different levels of government to work together and attempts constantly to find a mutually beneficial dialectic between top-down and bottom-up initiatives.

Strategic spatial planning processes, ideally, seek to resolve conflict between regional actors, citizens or groups of citizens; contribute to eliminating social exclusion and neutralizing power relations, which often tend to favour the most powerful. It allows for multilevel governance and public, economic and civil-society involvement during planning, decision-making and implementation stages. Civic and organizational participation is a key element of the definition of place branding postulated in this thesis, as it is in strategic spatial planning. Chapter 4 debates co-creation in place branding, chapter 5 touches upon the need for participatory place branding and chapter 8 picks up the key considerations of those two chapters and reflects critically on the idea of co-production in regional branding.

Place branding and strategic spatial planning both require a high level of engagement with key actors (local and/or regional) as a way to both guarantee the use of local and expert knowledge and to ensure that planning and branding processes are responsive, well informed, just and fair. This civic and institutional involvement before, during and after any place branding and spatial strategy making practices can assist and complement theoretical development. Aiming to capture different aspects of strategic spatial planning that contribute to the theoretical framework discussed in detail in chapters 2 and 5, this thesis proposes a strategic spatial planning framework that will support the construction of the main theoretical framework of the study that guided the qualitative, in-depth interviewing employed as a data-collection method.

After a thorough literature review, this thesis reflects and further explores the following six key focal points of strategic spatial planning. Strategic spatial planning focuses on: (i) place-specific qualities, assets and key regional social, cultural, productive, intellectual and physical strategic domains; (ii) addressing issues that really matter in the day-to-day life of communities; (iii) enabling structural change in an integrative, creative and innovative way; (iv) involving/engaging with key regional actors, civic society and institutions, and supporting the co-production of just and fair regional planning strategies; (v) envisioning agreed (hopefully better) and realistic futures within a more hybrid mode of democracy and multilevel governance that is open to diversity, equity and local and expert knowledge and values; and (vi) acquiring and strengthening spatial identity and the reinforcement of spatial feelings of belonging and attachment.

The six key focal points listed above have been reshaped with knowledge derived from the place-branding literature and tested using empirical evidence from the case study on northern Portugal. It was subsequently translated into a theoretical framework. The theoretical framework on which this thesis is based is the result of the intertwining relations between place branding and strategic spatial planning. Chapter 5 summarizes these relationships and establishes the theoretical framework of the study, which comprises six key vectors: (i) a focus on the region's qualities,

strategic domains, assets and attributes; (ii) a focus on addressing the region's economic, social and political constraints; (iii) a focus on enabling and communicating structural change; (iv) a focus on involving key regional actors and civic society; (v) a focus on envisioning shared, better and realistic futures and (vi) a focus on reinforcing of sense of belonging and regional feelings.

The theoretical framework of the study demonstrates the fact that a region brand striving for synergies with strategic spatial planning and focusing on the above-mentioned six vectors would be effective in improving the spatial condition of places, as well as envisioning shared futures. In addition, it would also be effective in fostering the attraction of investment, increasing tourism revenues, supporting local businesses, attracting and retaining talented people and inhabitants and supporting job creation and its maintenance. As clarified earlier, the theoretical exploration of this framework was conducted by taking northern Portugal as a case study. Chapter 5 also details relevant findings from a set of interviews with regional actors with a stake in and expertise of day-to-day issues of northern Portugal. It is worth mentioning that the starting point for chapters 5 and 6 resulted from the research findings debated in chapters 3 and 4.

Chapter 3 explores the roots of place-branding theory and practice in Portugal and its northern region, specifically. It synthesizes the main literature on the subject at the national and regional levels, with a special focus on the approaches taken. The chapter employs content analysis aiming to understand how place branding has been approached (or not) in spatial-development plans, strategic initiatives and policy documents mainly for the period between 2014 and 2020, at the national (Portugal), regional (northern Portugal), cross-border Euroregion (Galicia-northern Portugal) and supra-national levels. There are four key concluding remarks worth noting regarding the integration of branding principles into the current context: (i) 'place branding' is an absent term; (ii) there is a predominance of tourism-oriented promotional initiatives and investment-oriented marketing campaigns which are lacking vertical and horizontal institutional articulations; (iii) that inconsistent communication strategies exist, which are each supported by unique visual elements and aesthetic values and (iv) only the documents produced at a cross-border level (Galicia-northern Portugal) seem to articulate marketing initiatives in a better way, with more strategic spatial interventions and a vision for the Euroregion with an eye on the 2020 horizon (the 2020 horizon follows the European Union (EU) Strategy 2020 and the Partnership Agreement EU-Portugal for the period 2014–2020).

Chapter 4 shows how content analysis can be used to identify and understand the ways in which tourists and travellers perceive Portugal and its northern region as a place for tourism. This chapter underlines that the application of content analysis methodology to online material could contribute to a refined place-branding initiative for Portugal and its regions, including the northern part, by integrating user-generated and travel experts' content into the place-branding strategy — this is the co-creation of place brands.

Chapter 5 analyses the opinions of 16 key regional actors on a region-branding strategy for northern Portugal that is integrated as an instrument within wider strategic spatial planning. Its findings identify the key strategic domains in which the region excels. These domains could fuel a potential regional brand as a way to overcome deep-seated regional constraints and limitations identified in chapters 1 and 6. The strategic planning documents in force, however, have not yet

been successful in dealing with region branding. Testing the theoretical framework on the case study attempts to reinforce the primary strand of reasoning. Chapter 5 reveals that region branding integrated as an instrument in wider strategic spatial planning for northern Portugal would (i) support the communication of ongoing structural change and provide visibility to the region; (ii) support investment attraction, thereby supporting job creation, by linking key strategic domains with the demand needs and aligning regional strategies to support local business; (iii) boost the regional identity by focusing on the region's unique qualities (tangible and intangible elements) and (iv) contribute to envisioning different futures through the participation of key regional actors and organizations, aligning planning and branding based on regional narratives, stories, hopes and wills.

Chapter 6 brings into the debate the opinions of key regional actors on the tourism potential of northern Portugal, as well as an in-depth analysis of the main documents for the tourism sector the country. Specifically, the two entities that one can consider the most important in terms of tourism planning, development and region-branding initiatives, (among other substantive matters for the envisioning of better futures for the region) are (i) Tourism of Porto and the North of Portugal and (ii) the North Regional Coordination and Development Commission. Findings show that there are misalignments between the entities; misconceptions, such as the definition of a place brand and the nonexistence of a long-term vision for the tourism sector. The current economic and social environment reflects the lack of territorial organization and the definition of unique trajectories for spatial development and potential branding strategies. In line with interviewees' opinions, tourism plays a crucial role as a generator of jobs and revenues; therefore, it has been identified as a strategic domain able to integrate a wider regional-branding strategy. It thereby reinforces the key regional qualities, strategic domains, assets, attractions and attributes enumerated by interviewees in chapter 5 (see Figure 5.2.): (i) technical textiles, (ii) footwear, (iii) tourism, (iv) health-related activities and (v) agro-food related activities.

Chapter 7 adopts a strategic spatial planning approach to think strategically about potential joint place-branding initiatives between cross-border regions. The case study focuses on the cross-border region that is composed of the NUTS III Alto Minho, Cávado, Ave, Metropolitan Area of Porto/Área Metropolitana do Porto, Alto Tâmega, Tâmega e Sousa, Douro and Terras de Trás-os-Montes of Northern Portugal and the provinces of A Coruña, Lugo, Ourense and Pontevedra of the autonomous community of Galicia in north-west Spain. Chapter 7 aims to shed some light on the empirical significance of a cross-border place-branding strategy able to encourage entrepreneurship, job creation, trade and investment. Findings show that the combination of the key economic domains in which Galicia-northern Portugal excels will echo the cross-border assets and strengthen a joint cross-border region branding strategy. A cross-border branding strategy could give visibility to, build a coherent vision of and a respected storyline for the Euroregion of Galicia-northern Portugal, which is directed towards Portugal, Spain and the rest of the world.

The main contention of this thesis is that place branding must be taken as an instrument in strategic spatial planning (as a means), to improve the socio-spatial and spatial-economic conditions (the end) of places, independently of the geographical scale of application. In addition, this thesis brings a more geospatial understanding to the phenomenon of place branding, thus conveying an alternative approach to the dominant fetishes of business context and place

ranking/indexes. There remain, however, some unresolved issues within the place-branding literature and practices.

Chapter 8 identifies six needs to enhance the effectiveness of integrating place branding within strategic spatial planning: (i) the need to align place branding with place-specific qualities through tailor-made and context sensitive initiatives; (ii) the need to align place branding with spatial-development plans and strategic spatial-planning goals of a place, thus improving spatial conditions; (iii) the need for strategic thinking in place branding, thus enabling structural change in places; (iv) the need for co-production in place branding, thus co-producing a collective place branding initiative in a collective spatial logic; (v) the need to align place branding with the envisioning process of devising desirable futures, thus aligning the expectations people hold in their minds with the actual reality of the place in the present, and the aspirational future and (vi) the need to consider place branding as a possible route to reinvigorate spatial identities and a sense of place.

After highlighting and elaborating on the above issues, this thesis tries to promote interest in the alignment of potential place-branding strategies and wider spatial-planning strategies, and to encourage further research for the establishment of additional relationships. This research might lay the foundations for a rethinking of place branding and a theoretical and practical renewal of the strategic spatial planning approach.

Nederland Samenvatting

Dit proefschrift onderzoekt de daadwerkelijke of potentiële rol van *place branding* als instrument van de strategische planningsbenadering, specifiek op het regionale schaalniveau. Door middel van een grondige verkenning van de theoretische verbanden tussen *place branding* en strategische ruimtelijke planning adresseert dit proefschrift de lacunes in de *place-branding* literatuur en draagt bij aan de theoretische verfijning en ontwikkeling ervan. Tegelijkertijd draagt het proefschrift bij aan het instrumentenpalet van de strategische planningsbenadering en ruimtelijke strategievorming; derhalve versterkt het de fundamenten voor een vernieuwing van strategische ruimtelijke planning.

Dit proefschrift onderzoekt het empirisch belang van een region-branding initiatief, als instrument geïntegreerd in de bredere strategische ruimtelijke planning, door het als case studie behandelen van de noordelijke regio van Portugal, één van de vijf NUTS II regio's op het vaste land. Het doel van dit proefschrift is bij te dragen aan het academisch debat en de praktijk van *regional branding* door het bediscussiëren van de relevantie en effectiviteit in het ondersteunen van ruimtelijk-economische en sociaal-ruimtelijke herschikking middels het vormgeven van duidelijke voorziene, geaccordeerde en realistische toekomstbeelden voor plaatsen, zoals regio's.

De primaire redenatielijn die in dit proefschrift wordt gepostuleerd – *place branding* als instrument van strategische ruimtelijke planning – staat los van de corporate branding en marketingsbenaderingen ten opzichte van het proces van *place branding*, die nog altijd het discours beheersen. Dit is gedaan zonder het belang van het vertalen van mainstream methodes van business en corporate branding te ondermijnen; in plaats daarvan benadrukt het de waarde en effectiviteit van een meer geografisch en ruimtelijke ordeningsperspectief in *place branding*.

De onderzoeksvelden die het proefschrift aangrijpt winnen aan momentum in een tijd waarin *place branding* door place managers en beleidsmakers is omarmd als panacea voor een verbijsterend scala aan lokaal economische en sociale problemen. Bovendien is strategische ruimtelijke planning opgevat als een middel om de temporele en vaak ruimtelijke beperkingen van traditionele ruimtelijke ordeningsinstrumenten te overkomen. Daarnaast is de toepassing van branding procedures en filosofieën op districten, steden, landen en in beperktere mate (grensoverschrijdende) regio's verworden tot een aansprekend onderwerp voor academisch onderzoek. Dit heeft geresulteerd in verschillende theoretische ontwikkelingen alsmede methodologische bijdrages in de vorm van journalartikelen, boeken en rapporten.

Ondanks de groeiende interesse in de theorie en praktijk van *place branding*, zijn er nog steeds significante lacunes en niet verkende kwesties te behandelen. In weerwil van de omvang van het debat omtrent *place branding*, ontbreekt er nog altijd een conceptueel raamwerk om de relatie met ruimtelijke ordeningsstrategieën de verduidelijken.

Bovendien bespreekt de literatuur rond strategische ruimtelijke planning zelden het concept *place branding* of verwante begrippen, zoals in hoofdstuk 2 en 3 van dit proefschrift wordt benadrukt. Dit proefschrift beschrijft met een kritische blik het verband tussen *place branding* en strategische ruimtelijke planning. Het koppelen van *place-branding* initiatieven met ruimtelijke planning kan ook tegenwicht bieden aan de kritiek dat de praktijk ineffectief en neutraal zou zijn als het gaat om de daadwerkelijke behoeftes van de lokale gemeenschap, meer voorkeur geeft aan

de meer krachtige economische en sociale groepen en slechts gebrekkige aandacht heeft voor burgerparticipatie en samenwerking.

Van *place branding* wordt gedacht dat het strategische verandering in plaatsen zou faciliteren, specifiek door herverbeelden, herpositionering of het herschalen van processen, alsmede door het ondersteunen van endogene stedelijke en regionale ontwikkeling. *Place branding* kan ook worden ingezet ter ondersteuning van visievorming voor de toekomst van plaatsen, maar ook ter versterking van economische herstructurering, sociale integratie en cohesie, politieke betrokkenheid en participatie, plaats identificatie en op lange termijn het welzijn van burgers. De inzet van *place branding* als communicatie middel tussen overheid en zij die door de overheid worden bestuurd kan bijdragen aan de communicatie van het potentieel en de kwaliteiten van plaatsen, en op die manier bijdragen aan zichtbaarheid en verbetering van de nationale en internationale erkenning.

Place branding gaat niet alleen over promotionele maatregelen, maar allereerst om ruimtelijk-functionele, organisatorische en financiële maatregelen met als doel om de sociaal-ruimtelijke en ruimtelijk-economische condities van plaatsen structureel te verbeteren en te veranderen. Dit Ph.D. proefschrift pleit voor een meer op strategische ruimtelijke planning georiënteerde benadering van *place branding*. Dit is een benadering die poogt de zoektocht naar denkwijzen die kunnen bijdragen aan het oplossen van een aantal onopgeloste theoretische en empirische vraagstukken binnen *place branding* te ondersteunen.

Het achtste hoofdstuk van dit proefschrift verfijnt deze aanpak, met als doel *place branding* effectiever te maken; meer economisch, sociaal en ecologisch verantwoordelijk; evenals meer gegrond in het theoretische gebied van onderzoek en praktijk. De ontdekking van een nieuwe theoretische basis levert een bijdrage door een heroverweging van *place branding* die verder gaat dan de zakelijke context, maar ook veel verder dan de op zichzelf gerichte fascinatie voor plaats promotie en / of reclame-strategieën waar sommige *place managers* en politici aan vasthouden. Deze grote afhankelijkheid van plaats logo's, slogans en mainstream promotiecampagnes hebben bewezen vruchteloos te zijn voor het wijzigen van de globale perceptie van een plaats, wat bijdraagt aan het welzijn van lokale gemeenschappen of het activeren van structurele veranderingen.

Dit proefschrift stelt dat *place branding* en *place brands* vooral moet worden gericht op de ondersteuning van lokale bedrijven, verbetering van de infrastructuur en het verstrekken van gezondheidszorg en onderwijs, in plaats van vooral gefocust te zijn op het aantrekken van investeringen, toeristen en hooggekwalificeerde werknemers.

Om dit mogelijk te maken stelt dit proefschrift dat de integratie van *place branding* als instrument in strategische ruimtelijke planning een mogelijke oplossing biedt. Hoofdstuk 2 reflecteert kritisch op de centrale onderzoeksvragen van dit proefschrift – Hoe en waarom kan (en uiteindelijk, behoort) *place branding* als een instrument worden gebruikt in de strategische ruimtelijke planningsaanpak (en daarbij bijdragende aan de verbetering van de sociaal-ruimtelijke en ruimtelijk-economische condities), door de respons op de hedendaagse uitdagingen waar plekken voor staan te hervormen en vorm te geven aan de duidelijk verbeelde, overeengekomen, maatschappelijk verantwoorde en realistische toekomstbeelden voor plaatsen en regio's?

Strategische ruimtelijke planning, een geïntegreerde benadering van de ontwikkeling van een gebied, is gericht op het overwinnen van de tekortkomingen van traditionele en/of wettelijke ruimtelijke planning. Traditionele ruimtelijke planningsinstrumenten zijn voornamelijk gericht op de locatie, de intensiteit en de harmonisatie van het landgebruik en ontwikkeling. Er is echter op grote schaal gedebatteerd of steden en regio's, zoals het noorden van Portugal, worden geconfronteerd met een complexe reeks uitdagingen die met de traditionele benadering van ruimtelijke planning alleen niet meer adequaat kunnen worden aangepakt en beheerd. De strategische ruimtelijke planningsaanpak ontpopt zich dus als een manier om een referentiekader te bieden voor het scherpstellen en coördineren van de besluiten en acties van lokale actoren die zich bezig houden met ruimtelijke veranderingen, door de hedendaagse sociale, ruimtelijke en economische behoeften van een plaats met elkaar te confronteren en een betere toekomst te verbeelden.

Een visie voor een plaats biedt burgers en lokale actoren beelden van de toekomst die kunnen worden gedeeld, een gevoel van richting en mobilisatie rond overeengekomen, belangrijke zaken voor de ruimtelijke ontwikkeling. Daarnaast wordt strategische ruimtelijke planning gezien als een actieve kracht die verandering mogelijk maakt en helpt om publieke agenda's op een integrale manier te veranderen. Als een set van *governance* praktijken voor het ontwikkelen en implementeren van strategieën, plannen, beleid en projecten, is strategische ruimtelijke planning in staat om de verschillende niveaus van de overheid aan te moedigen om samen te werken en probeert constant om een wederzijds voordelige dialectiek tussen top-down en bottom-up initiatieven te vinden.

Strategische ruimtelijke planningsprocessen pogen, idealiter, conflicten tussen regionale actoren, burgers of groepen burgers op te lossen; deze processen dragen bij aan het elimineren van sociale uitsluiting en het neutraliseren van machtsverhoudingen, die vaak de neiging hebben om in het voordeel van de meest krachtige uit te pakken. Het maakt *multilevel governance* mogelijk en de publieke, economische en maatschappelijke betrokkenheid bij de ruimtelijke planning, besluitvorming en uitvoeringsfasen.

Participatie van burgers en organisaties is een belangrijk element van de definitie van *place branding* die in dit proefschrift wordt gepostuleerd zoals het ook is in de strategische ruimtelijke planning. Hoofdstuk 4 bediscussieert co-creatie in *place branding*, hoofdstuk 5 behandelt de noodzaak van participatieve *place branding* en hoofdstuk 8 pakt de belangrijkste overwegingen van die twee hoofdstukken op en reflecteert kritisch op het idee van co-productie in *regional branding*.

Place branding en de strategische ruimtelijke planning vereisen beide een hoge mate van betrokkenheid van de belangrijkste actoren (lokaal en/of regionaal) als een manier om de kennis uit het gebied en van experts te garanderen. Daarnaast is het ook een manier om er voor te zorgen dat planologische processen en processen van *branding* op basis van goede informatie, responsief, juist en eerlijk verlopen. De maatschappelijke en institutionele betrokkenheid vóór, tijdens en na iedere activiteit van *place branding* en strategische ruimtelijke planning kan de ontwikkeling van theorieën ondersteunen en aanvullen. Met het doel om de verschillende aspecten van de strategische ruimtelijke planning die een bijdrage leveren aan het theoretisch raamwerk te vangen, die in de hoofdstukken 2 en 5 gedetailleerd uiteen worden gezet, biedt dit proefschrift een raamwerk voor strategische ruimtelijke planning dat weer bijdraagt aan de opbouw van het centrale

theoretisch raamwerk van dit proefschrift. Dit raamwerk voor strategische ruimtelijke planning is de basis achter de kwalitatieve, diepgaande interviews die zijn uitgevoerd als een methode om data te verzamelen.

Dit proefschrift verkent en reflecteert vervolgens op een zestal kernpunten van strategische ruimtelijke planning na een grondige literatuurstudie. De zes kernpunten waarop strategische ruimtelijke planning focust zijn: (i) gebiedsspecifieke kwaliteiten, bezittingen, en sociale, culturele, productieve, intellectuele en fysieke strategische domeinen die regionaal een sleutelrol hebben; (ii) het aanpakken van vraagstukken die er voor gemeenschappen in het dagelijks leven echt toe doen; (iii) het mogelijk maken van structurele verandering op een manier die integraal, creatief en innovatief is; (iv) het actief betrekken en betrokken houden van regionaal belangrijke actoren, maatschappelijke partijen en instituties, en het ondersteunen van coproductie van rechtvaardige en eerlijke strategieën voor regionale planning; (v) de visievorming van overeengekomen (hopelijk betere) en realistische beelden van de toekomst binnen een meer hybride vorm van democratie en een bestuur dat op meer niveaus openstaat voor diversiteit, billijkheid, en de kennis en waarden van lokale kennis en specifieke expertise bij experts; en (vi) het verkrijgen en versterken van een regionale identiteit en het versterken van gevoelens van ruimtelijke verbondenheid en de hechting aan een specifieke plek.

Deze opgesomde zes kernpunten zijn opnieuw vormgegeven met kennis onttrokken aan de literatuur over *place branding* en getest door gebruik te maken van empirisch bewijs van de casestudie in Noord-Portugal. Vervolgens is dit vertaald naar het theoretisch raamwerk. Het theoretisch raamwerk dat als fundament onder dit proefschrift ligt, is het resultaat van het verweven van verbanden tussen *place branding* en strategische ruimtelijke planning. Hoofdstuk 5 vat deze verbanden samen en vormt zo uiteindelijk het theoretisch kader van de voorliggende studie, dat uit zes hoofdrichtingen bestaat. Te weten: (i) een focus op de kwaliteiten van de regio; (ii) een focus op het aanpakken van de beperkingen die er in de regio zijn op economisch, sociaal en politiek vlak; (iii) een focus op het mogelijk maken en communiceren van structurele verandering; (iv) een focus op het betrekken van regionaal belangrijke actoren en burgers; (v) een focus op de visievorming van gedeelde, betere en realistische toekomstbeelden en (vi) een focus op het versterken van het gevoel van verbondenheid en regionale gevoelens.

Het theoretisch kader van dit onderzoek toont aan dat een *region brand* dat streeft naar synergiën met strategische ruimtelijke planning en focust op de bovengenoemde zes vectoren effectief zal zijn in het verbeteren van de ruimtelijke conditie van plaatsen en in het creëren van gedeelde toekomsten.

Daarnaast zal het ook effectief zijn in het aanjagen van het aantrekken van investeringen, het vergroten van de opbrengsten uit toerisme, het ondersteunen van lokale ondernemingen, het aantrekken en behouden van getalenteerde mensen en inwoners en het ondersteunen van het behoud en de creatie van werkgelegenheid. Zoals eerder aangegeven is de theoretische verkenning van dit raamwerk uitgevoerd door het noorden van Portugal als een case studie te nemen. Hoofdstuk 5 gaat ook dieper in op de relevante bevindingen uit een serie interviews met regionale actoren met een belang in en expertise van de dagelijkse problemen van Noord-Portugal.

Hoofdstuk 3 onderzoekt de wortels van de theorie en praktijk van *place branding* in Portugal en in het bijzonder haar noordelijke regio. Het synthetiseert de belangrijkste literatuur over het onderwerp op nationaal en regionaal niveau met een speciale focus op de gehanteerde benaderingen. Het hoofdstuk voert een content analyse uit met het doel om te begrijpen hoe *place branding* wordt benaderd (of niet) in plannen voor ruimtelijke ontwikkeling, strategische initiatieven en beleidsdocumenten voor met name de periode tussen 2014 en 2020, op het nationale (Portugal), regionale (Noord-Portugal), grensoverschrijdende Eurregio (Galicië-Noord Portugal) en supranationale niveau. Er zijn vier belangrijke concluderende opmerkingen het vermelden waard met betrekking tot de integratie van branding principes in de huidige context: (i) '*place branding*' is een afwezige term; (ii) er is een oververtegenwoordiging van promotie initiatieven die toerisme-georiënteerd zijn en marketingcampagnes die georiënteerd zijn op investeringen die verticale en horizontale institutionele articulaties missen; (iii) er bestaan inconsistente communicatiestrategieën die allemaal gesteund worden door unieke visuele elementen en esthetische waarden en (iv) alleen de documenten die zijn geproduceerd op een grensoverschrijdend niveau (Galicië-Noord-Portugal) lijken marketinginitiatieven op een betere manier te benadrukken, met meer strategische ruimtelijke interventies en een visie voor de Eurregio met het oog op Horizon 2020 (Horizon 2020 volgt de strategie van de Europese Unie (EU) Strategie 2020 en de partnerovereenkomst EU-Portugal voor de periode 2014-2020).

Hoofdstuk 4 laat zien hoe content analyse gebruikt kan worden om de manieren te identificeren en te begrijpen waarop toeristen en reizigers Portugal en haar noordelijke regio waarderen als een plaats voor toerisme. Dit hoofdstuk onderschrijft dat de toepassing van de methodologie van content analyse op online materiaal bij kan dragen aan een *place branding* initiatief voor Portugal en haar regio's, inclusief het noordelijke deel, door het integreren van gebruiker-gegenereerde data en expertise van reizigers in de *place branding* strategie – dit is de co-creatie van *place brands*.

Hoofdstuk 5 analyseert de meningen van 16 belangrijke regionale actoren over de regio branding strategie van Noord-Portugal dat is geïntegreerd als een instrument voor bredere strategische ruimtelijke planning. De conclusies onderkennen de primaire strategische domeinen waarin dit gebied excelleert. Deze domeinen kunnen een voedingsbodem zijn voor potentiële *region branding* als middel om diepgewortelde regionale beperkingen te overwinnen en de tekortkomingen die zijn geïdentificeerd in hoofdstuk 1 en 6. De strategische documenten die van kracht zijn, zijn desalniettemin er nog niet in geslaagd om succesvol om te gaan met *region branding*. Het testen van het theoretisch kader op de case study beoogt het versterken van de primaire argumentatie. Hoofdstuk 5 brengt aan het licht dat *regional branding* geïntegreerd als instrument in bredere strategische ruimtelijke planning voor Noord-Portugal zou zorgen voor (i) het bevorderen van de communicatie van lopende structurele verandering en voorzien in zichtbaarheid van de regio; (ii) het bevorderen van de aantrekkelijkheid om te investeren, waardoor baanontwikkeling wordt bevorderd door het in verbinding brengen van primaire strategische domeinen met vraag en behoefte en het uitlijnen van regionale strategieën voor het ondersteunen van lokale bedrijvigheid; (iii) het stimuleren van een regionale identiteit door te richten op de regio's unieke kwaliteiten (tastbare en ontastbare elementen); en (iv) bijdragen aan een visievorming van verschillende

toekomstbeelden door de participatie van verschillende belangrijke actoren en organisaties, uitlijnen van ruimtelijke planning en *branding* gebaseerd op regionale verhalen en wensen.

Hoofdstuk 6 brengt de meningen van belangrijke regionale actoren naar voren over de potentie van het toerisme in Noord-Portugal, evenals een diepte analyse van de voornaamste documenten van de toerismesector van het land. In het bijzonder worden er twee entiteiten onderscheiden die men als het belangrijkst kan beschouwen op het gebied van toerisme planning, ontwikkeling en *regio branding* initiatieven, (onder andere inhoudelijke vraagstukken voor de visievorming omtrent een betere toekomst voor de regio) zijn: (i) Tourism of Porto and the North of Portugal; en (ii) the North Regional Coordination and Development Commission. De bevindingen laten zien dat er afwijkingen bestaan tussen deze twee entiteiten; misvattingen, zoals de definitie van een *place brand* en het missen van een langetermijnvisie voor de toerismesector. De huidige economische en sociale setting weerspiegelt het gebrek aan territoriale organisatie en definitie voor unieke trajecten voor ruimtelijke ontwikkeling en de potentiele branding strategieën. In lijn met de meningen van geïnterviewden speelt toerisme een cruciale rol als generator van banen en inkomsten; derhalve, is toerisme aangemerkt als een strategisch domein dat in staat is om een bredere *regional branding* strategie te integreren. Daarbij versterkt het de belangrijke regionale kwaliteiten/karakteristieken van de regio, strategische domeinen, activa, bezienswaardigheden en attributen genoemd door geinterviewden in hoofdstuk 5 (zie figuur 5.2.): (i) technisch textiel; (ii) schoeisel; (iii) toerisme; (iv) gezondheidsgerelateerde activiteiten; en (v) voedselgerelateerde activiteiten. Hoofdstuk 7 past een strategische ruimtelijke planningsbenadering toe om strategische afwegingen te maken over de potenties van joint *place branding* initiatieven tussen grensoverschrijdende regio's. De case-study richt zich op de *cross-border* regio Galicië-Noord Portugal, bestaande uit Alto Minho, Cávado, Ave, Área Metropolitana do Porto, Alto Tâmega, Tâmega e Sousa, Douro, Terras de Trás-os-Montes in Noord Portugal en de provincies A Coruña, Lugo, Ourense en Pontevedra in Galicië, noord-west Spanje (NUTS III).

Hoofdstuk 7 geeft enkele empirische inzichten in de rol van een grensoverschrijdende *place-branding* strategie, waarmee ondernemerschap, het creëren van banen, handel en investeringen worden gestimuleerd. De resultaten laten zien dat een combinatie van de belangrijkste economische aspecten waarin de grensregio van Galicië en Noord-Portugal excelleert de *cross-border* voordelen in zich verenigt en een gezamenlijke regionale *branding* strategie versterkt. Een *cross-border branding* strategie kan daarmee zichtbaarheid en bekendheid geven aan de Euroregio Galicië-Noord Portugal. De belangrijkste bewering in dit proefschrift is dat *place branding* als een instrument moet worden gebruikt in strategische ruimtelijke planning (het middel), waarmee de sociaal-ruimtelijke en ruimtelijk-economische situaties worden verbeterd (het doel), onafhankelijk van het geografische schaalniveau.

Daarnaast geeft dit proefschrift een meer ruimtelijk-geografisch georiënteerd inzicht in het fenomeen *place branding*, waarmee het een alternatief biedt voor de dominantie van marktgeoriënteerde benaderingen en de heersende fetisj van ranglijsten. Desondanks zijn er nog altijd een aantal vraagstukken binnen de *place branding* literatuur en de toepassing van *place branding* in de praktijk.

Hoofdstuk 8 identificeert zes vereisten om de effectiviteit van de integratie van *place branding* in strategische ruimtelijke planning te verbeteren: (i) de vereiste om *place branding* af te stemmen op plaats-specifieke kwaliteiten, door op maat gemaakte en contextgevoelige initiatieven; (ii) de vereiste om *place branding* af te stemmen op plannen voor ruimtelijke ontwikkeling en doelstelling van strategische ruimtelijke planning van plekken, hiermee dus de ruimtelijke gesteldheid verbeterend; (iii) de vereiste van een strategische denkwijze in *place branding*, waarmee dus structurele verandering van plekken mogelijk wordt gemaakt; (iv) de vereiste van co-productie in *place branding*, waarmee dus een gezamenlijk *place branding* initiatief wordt gecreëerd binnen de betreffende gezamenlijke ruimtelijke context; (v) de vereiste om *place branding* af te stemmen op te vormen visies over een wenselijke toekomst, waarmee de verwachtingen van mensen overeenkomen met de actuele realiteit en de ambities voor de toekomst; en (vi) de vereiste om *place branding* te overwegen als mogelijke route om ruimtelijke identiteiten en een *sense of place* nieuw leven in te blazen.

Na het benadrukken van en uitwijden over bovengenoemde zaken, probeert dit proefschrift interesse te wekken voor het afstemmen van mogelijke *place branding* strategieën met bredere strategieën voor ruimtelijke planning en wil het verder onderzoek naar mogelijke andere relaties tussen deze processen stimuleren. Hiermee kan dit onderzoek een basis leggen voor een heroverweging van de rol van *place branding* en voor een nieuwe theoretische en praktische benadering van strategische ruimtelijke planning.

Resumo em Português

Esta tese de doutoramento analisa e reflete criticamente sobre o papel do *place branding* integrado como um instrumento no planeamento estratégico territorial, dando especial enfase à escala regional. Através de uma exaustiva exploração das ligações teóricas entre o *place branding* e o planeamento estratégico territorial, este documento procura discutir possíveis respostas para as significativas lacunas ainda existentes na literatura da criação de marcas territoriais, contribuindo assim para o seu refinamento teórico e maturação da sua prática. Em simultâneo, a tese contribui para a discussão a respeito da panóplia de instrumentos que suportam o planeamento territorial bem como a elaboração de estratégias territoriais. Neste sentido, a tese procura de forma critica e construtiva, contribuir também para o fortalecimento das bases teóricas e práticas do planeamento estratégico territorial.

Para além do referido, a presente enunciação doutoral investiga a importância empírica de uma iniciativa de criação e desenvolvimento de uma marca regional (*regional branding*), integrada como um instrumento no planeamento estratégico territorial, incidindo essa investigação numa das cinco regiões continentais de Portugal – a região do Norte. Tendo a região do Norte de Portugal como a unidade geográfica de estudo, esta tese discute a relevância e eficácia do *place branding* no apoio ao desenvolvimento socioeconómico e mudança estrutural, através da formação de visões partilhadas para o futuro da região numa abordagem integradora que coloca a participação e o envolvimento de atores locais e comunidades no pedestal de um potencial processo de *regional branding*.

A principal linha de raciocínio postulada neste documento e nos artigos académicos que lhe deram origem - *place branding* como um instrumento do planeamento estratégico territorial - é uma linha de raciocínio e de investigação que pretende ir muito mais além do que a escala regional. Procura também distanciar-se da abordagem baseada em princípios e conceitos do *branding* e marketing corporativos que continuam a dominar o discurso contemporâneo em *place branding*. Importa ainda sublinhar que a linha de raciocínio exacerbada nesta tese não pretende menosprezar ou desvalorizar o valor de uma abordagem mais próxima aos conceitos dos negócios, como *branding* e marketing corporativos, mas visa sim complementá-la e enriquecê-la - explorando uma abordagem mais geográfica-territorial ao *place branding* que pode introduzir mais eficácia, ser mais justa e socialmente mais responsável.

Os campos de pesquisa com que esta tese se preocupa têm vindo a ganhar notoriedade entre governos locais e regionais bem como entre os decisores políticos ligados ao ordenamento do território de países, regiões e cidades. Este crescimento significativo da popularidade do *place branding* está também ele relacionado com o facto de este fenómeno, quer na teoria, quer na prática estar a ser cada vez mais encarado como uma solução para um conjunto de instabilidades económicas e sociais sentidas por comunidades e organizações no seu dia-a-dia. O planeamento estratégico territorial tem vindo também ele a ganhar em popularidade como um meio de superar as limitações temporais e territoriais dos atuais instrumentos do planeamento territorial, essencialmente preocupado com gestão e uso dos solos. Além disso, a aplicação de procedimentos e filosofias de criação de marcas territoriais à escala do distrito, cidade, país e, em menor grau, à escala regional e transfronteiriça passou a ser um interessante e cativante tópico para académicos especializados em marketing, planeamento territorial, turismo, diplomacia e administração pública. Este expandir do interesse pelo

place branding, tem permitido vários desenvolvimentos teóricos e metodológicos na forma de artigos em revistas científicas, livros, relatórios, conferências e páginas temáticas nas redes sociais. Esta tese fornece alguns exemplos.

Não obstante a extensão do debate em torno da criação de marcas territoriais para diversas escalas geográficas, o *place branding* carece ainda de uma estrutura conceitual para desvendar a sua relação, no presente e potencial, com o planeamento estratégico territorial. Além disso, e como é amplamente explicado nos capítulos 2 e 3 desta tese, o planeamento estratégico territorial tem vindo a negligenciar o *place branding* e conceitos relacionados, como o *place marketing*. O facto de que esta tese procura desenvolver uma abordagem mais geográfica e mais em linha com os objectivos do planeamento estratégico territorial permite contrapor as críticas que incidem sobre o *place branding*. Essas críticas estão relacionadas com a potencial ineficácia, neutralidade em relação às reais necessidades das comunidades locais, favorecimento de grandes grupos económicos e sociais que muitas vezes são apontadas ao *place branding*.

O *place branding* tem vindo a ser pensado como um elemento facilitador da mudança estrutural-estratégica em cidades e regiões - especificamente, através de processos de redefinição de imagem, redefinição do posicionamento estratégico, e redimensionamento das escalas administrativas, do ordenamento e gestão territorial. Ainda assim, os atuais pensamentos exigem uma reflexão mais detalhada. O *place branding* tem vindo também a ganhar importância como um vetor fundamental do desenvolvimento urbano e regional endógeno e na definição de uma visão de futuro para um determinado território. Objectivos de reestruturação económica, de inclusão e coesão social, o de fomentar a participação cívica em processos de tomada de decisão, o do reforço da identificação de indivíduos com os lugares a que pertencem e no geral contribuir para o bem-estar dos cidadãos num longo prazo tem sido objectivos associados ao *place branding*. Este fenómeno pode ainda contribuir de forma assertiva para dar visibilidade e reforçar o reconhecimento nacional e internacional de um território, como por exemplo o Norte de Portugal.

Importa sublinhar que *place branding* envolve mais do que medidas de promoção territorial. O *place branding* é um fenómeno que encinta medidas territoriais-funcionais, organizacionais e financeiras que têm como objectivo suportar uma mudança estrutural-estratégica bem como apoiar a melhoria da condição económica e social de determinado território. A abordagem aqui investigada procura formas de pensar que sejam capazes de contribuir para a resolução de algumas questões teóricas e empíricas que não foram ainda resolvidas no contexto da aplicação de marcas a um território seja ele uma cidade, região ou um país.

A descoberta de uma nova linha teórica contribui para repensar o *place branding* muito para além do contexto do *branding* de produtos ou serviços, numa linha de raciocínio que pretende ir também muito mais além do fascínio que autoridades locais e regionais por vezes demonstram pela simples promoção das suas unidades geográficas de jurisdição. Promoção essa que é na maior parte dos casos caracterizada por uma total ausência de estratégia e por envolver elevados investimentos. Esta dependência excessiva por logótipos, logos, logomarcas, *slogans* e campanhas promocionais tradicionais encetadas por territórios, tem vindo a ser criticada por demonstrarem serem infrutíferas na alteração de percepções globais a respeito de uma cidade ou região, por não contribuírem de

forma significativa para o bem-estar das comunidades locais e não permitirem uma mudança estrutural-estratégica nem gerarem valor acrescentado a um território no longo prazo.

Esta tese sublinha que o *place branding*, enquanto processo e enquanto resultado final (uma marca territorial) deve ser/estar primariamente orientado para prestar apoio a empresas locais, apoiar a melhoria das infra-estruturas de prestação de serviços como, por exemplo, dos serviços de saúde e de educação, ao invés de se focar única e exclusivamente em atrair capital na forma de investimento e na forma de capital humano, como turistas e trabalhadores altamente qualificados. No sentido de robustecer este pensamento, o capítulo 2 identifica e criticamente reflecte sobre a principal questão de pesquisa, que é - como, e por que pode (e eventualmente até deva) o *place branding* ser usado como um instrumento do planeamento estratégico territorial (contribuindo, assim, para a melhoria da situação socioeconómica de um território); reformulando assim possíveis respostas aos desafios contemporâneos a que cidades, regiões e países estão expostos, bem como apoiar a criação e desenvolvimento de visões partilhadas, realistas e socialmente responsáveis para o futuro de um território?

A literatura do planeamento estratégico territorial, extensivamente analisada neste documento, adopta uma abordagem integrada do desenvolvimento territorial, tendo por objectivo superar as lacunas de um tipo de planeamento territorial mais tradicional e/ou regulado que é caracterizado por ser menos flexível e menos dinâmico. Os instrumentos de planeamento territorial - "ditos tradicionais" - demonstram uma maior preocupação sobre matérias como a localização, intensidade e harmonização do uso do solo bem como a sua ocupação e posterior desenvolvimento. Contudo, tem sido amplamente debatido na literatura que territórios, como cidades e regiões, onde podemos incluir o Norte de Portugal, estão expostos a uma complexa gama de desafios sociais, económicos e territoriais que não podem ser geridos ou resolvidos simplesmente com os instrumentos tradicionais do planeamento territorial (alguns desses problemas são o envelhecimento da população; alterações climáticas; desequilíbrios nos saldos migratórios; desemprego e diminuição do poder de compra). O planeamento estratégico territorial surgiu, portanto, como uma forma de fornecer um quadro de referência para um maior enfoque e coordenação de decisões políticas, de planeamento e administrativas com as ações de atores locais que lidam com processos de mudança territorial estrutural e estratégica. As necessidades sociais, económicas e de ordenamento territorial são confrontadas e o planeamento estratégico territorial recorre a processos de criação de visões territoriais para desvendar um futuro melhor para esse território e para os que com ele interagem (isto é, indivíduos, comunidades e organizações públicas e privadas).

A definição de uma visão de longo-prazo para um território proporciona aos cidadãos, e demais entidades, possíveis caminhos a seguir para um futuro que pode, e ultimamente até deva, ser compartilhado por todos. Essa visão proporciona também um sentido de direção e mobilização em torno de questões importantes para o desenvolvimento harmonioso de uma cidade ou região. Acresce ainda que o planeamento estratégico territorial é também ele pensado como uma força ativa - incitando e apoiando processos de mudança estratégica e o de ajustar de agendas públicas. O planeamento estratégico territorial é capaz de encorajar diferentes níveis de governo a trabalhar em conjunto o que facilitará o alcançar de consenso na criação de uma marca territorial por exemplo.

Idealmente, processos de planeamento estratégico territorial procuram resolver potenciais conflitos (registados no presente ou potenciais) entre atores regionais, cidadãos ou grupos de cidadãos; contribuir para eliminar a exclusão social e neutralizar relações de poder, que muitas vezes tendem a favorecer os grupos sociais mais poderosos ou comummente favorecidos. A abordagem estratégica ao planeamento territorial permite que a governação ocorra a vários níveis. Permite ainda um elevado envolvimento de entidades políticas, económicas e da sociedade civil durante o processo de planeamento, de tomada de decisão e subsequentes fases de implementação. A participação cívica, e de organizações em processos de *place branding* e de planeamento estratégico territorial, é essencial e esta tese reflete criticamente sobre a necessidade e eficácia deste maior envolvimento de múltiplos atores em processos de formalização de estratégia e construção de marcas territoriais. O capítulo 4, por exemplo, debate a co-criação em *place branding* ou a co-criação de marcas territoriais, o que pressupõe que indivíduos ou entidades contribuam para o conteúdo de marcas territoriais – as marcas serão "alimentadas" por todos e não apenas por um grupo de entidades com uma posição mais favorecida na sociedade ou nos mecanismos de tomada de decisão. O capítulo 5, por outro lado, aborda a necessidade de adoptar uma abordagem muito mais participativa em processos de *place branding* detalhando a opinião de dezasseis entidades com responsabilidades sobre o planeamento e o desenvolvimento do Norte de Portugal. O capítulo 8, abraça as principais considerações desses dois capítulos, e restantes, e debate a ideia de co-produção em processos de *place branding*.

Quer o *place branding* quer o planeamento estratégico territorial exigem um elevado nível de participação de atores locais e/ou regionais como uma forma de garantir o uso tanto de conhecimento local, como o de especialistas, bem como para assegurar que os processos de planeamento territorial e *place branding* sejam efectivos, estão bem informados e sejam justos para com comunidades e organizações. Este maior envolvimento cívico e institucional quer antes, quer durante, quer depois de qualquer processo de *place branding* pode também apoiar e complementar o desenvolvimento teórico. Com o objetivo de capturar diferentes aspectos do planeamento estratégico territorial, e que contribuem para o quadro teórico discutido em detalhe nos capítulos 2 e 5, esta tese propõe um quadro de trabalho do planeamento estratégico territorial que apoia a construção do principal referencial teórico do estudo e que orientou a parte empírica desta investigação, que por sua vez foi suportada por entrevistas em profundida e análise de conteúdo de planos e estratégias territoriais para Portugal e a região do Norte.

Depois de uma exaustiva revisão da literatura, esta tese debate os seguintes seis pontos-chave do planeamento estratégico territorial. O planeamento estratégico territorial centra-se: (i) nas qualidades específicas de um território, nos seus ativos bem como nos seus domínios estratégicos sociais, culturais, produtivos, intelectuais e físicos; (ii) em questões que realmente importam no dia-a-dia das comunidades; (iii) em permitir a mudança estrutural-estratégica de uma forma integradora, criativa e inovadora; (iv) em envolver actores regionais, sociedade e instituições civis, bem como apoiar a co-produção de estratégias territoriais justas e eficazes; (v) definir visões realistas para o futuro de um território num contexto híbrido entre democracia, participação e processos de governança a vários níveis, com respeito pela diversidade, equidade, conhecimento e valores; e (vi) na aquisição e reforço da identidade de um território e no reforço dos sentimentos de pertença.

Os seis pontos acima identificados foram reformulados tendo presente a literatura em *place branding* e testados usando evidência empírica a partir do estudo de caso sobre o Norte de Portugal. A teoria foi complementada com os dados recolhidos na fase de trabalho de campo e um novo quadro teórico foi construído. O quadro teórico em que esta tese se baseia é o resultado das relações presentes e potenciais entre o *place branding* e o planeamento estratégico territorial. O capítulo 5, por exemplo, resume essas relações e apresenta o quadro teórico do estudo, que compreende seis vectores principais: (i) um foco nas qualidades de um território, nos seus domínios estratégicos, ativos e atributos; (ii) um foco nos principais constrangimentos económicos, sociais e políticos da região; (iii) um foco em capacitar e comunicar uma mudança estrutural-estratégica; (iv) um foco em envolver actores regionais e a sociedade civil; (v) um foco na criação de visões realistas para o futuro de um território; e (vi) um foco no reforço do sentimento de pertença, sentimentos e emoções regionais.

O referencial teórico do presente estudo demonstra que se uma marca territorial para uma região, integrada como um instrumento do planeamento estratégico territorial, e em linha com os seis vectores acima mencionados, permitirá, em larga medida, contribuir para a melhoria da condição socioeconómica e territorial assim como para a definição de visões para o futuro da região. Além disso, a marca regional seria também ela eficaz na promoção territorial, na atracção de investimentos, no aumento das receitas do turismo, no apoio ao tecido empresarial local, na atracção e muito importante na retenção de capital humana qualificado e no apoio à criação de emprego e a sua manutenção.

O capítulo 3 explora as raízes do *place branding* em Portugal e na região do Norte. O capítulo seguiu o método de recolha de dados da análise de conteúdo com o objetivo de compreender como o *place branding* tem sido abordado (ou não) nos planos territoriais de desenvolvimento, iniciativas estratégicas e documentos de índole política, principalmente para o período entre 2014 e 2020, aos níveis nacional (Portugal), regional (Norte de Portugal), euro-regional/transfronteiriço (Galiza-Norte de Portugal) e supra-nacional (União Europeia). No que respeita à integração de princípios do *place branding* em documentos e planos há quatro observações dignas de nota: (i) *place branding* é um termo ausente dos planos de ordenamento territorial; (ii) há uma predominância de iniciativas promocionais vocacionadas para o turismo e campanhas de marketing orientadas para a atração de investimento, sendo também notório a inexistência de articulação entre entidades nacionais e regionais; (iii) existem estratégias de comunicação inconsistentes e unicamente apoiadas por elementos visuais como logos; e (iv) somente os documentos produzidos ao nível euro-regional/transfronteiriço parecem articular melhor iniciativas de *place branding* e marketing com a estratégia para a Euro-região até 2020.

O capítulo 4 mostra ainda como a análise de conteúdo pode ser utilizado para identificar e compreender as maneiras pelas quais os turistas e viajantes percebem Portugal e a região do Norte como destinos turísticos. Este capítulo sublinha que a aplicação da metodologia de análise de conteúdo em material/conteúdo publicado na internet poderia e até deveria contribuir para uma iniciativa de *place-branding* mais refinado para a região do Norte de Portugal. Isto, através da integração de conteúdo gerado por turistas e viajantes (co-criação) numa potencial marca territorial regional.

O capítulo 5 analisa ainda as opiniões de dezasseis actores regionais por mim entrevistados sobre uma potencial marca territorial para a região do Norte integrada no planeamento estratégico territorial, como referido. Em linha com as opiniões destes, os domínios estratégicos da região são identificados: (i) os têxteis técnicos, (ii) o calçado, (iii) o turismo, (iv) as actividades relacionadas com o setor da saúde (v) e as atividades relacionadas com o setor agro-alimentares. Os atores regionais, argumentam que estes domínios podem "nutrir" uma potencial marca regional como forma de superar as restrições e limitações socioeconómicas. Os documentos de planeamento estratégico em vigor, quer ao nível nacional, quer ao nível regional, não foram ainda bem sucedidos em lidar com o *place branding* é outra das conclusões do capítulo. O capítulo 5 revela complementarmente que uma potencial marca regional integrada como instrumento num planeamento estratégico territorial mais amplo para a região do Norte de Portugal: (i) poderá apoiar a comunicação de uma potencial mudança estrutural-estratégica e proporcionará uma maior visibilidade para a região; (ii) poderá gerar mais investimento em vários domínios da sociedade, apoiando assim, a criação de emprego, ligando domínios estratégicos com as verdadeiras necessidades das comunidades locais, alinhando estratégias regionais de apoio a empresas; (iii) poderá reforçar identidades regionais, centrando-se nas qualidades únicas da região (elementos tangíveis e intangíveis); e (iv) poderá contribuir para a criação de visões territoriais para o futuro através de uma maior participação dos principais actores regionais e organizações, alinhando desta forma mais participativa, o planeamento estratégico e o *place branding*, baseado em narrativas regionais, no conhecimento local nas esperanças e vontades de comunidades e organizações.

O capítulo 6 enaltece as opiniões de dois dos dezasseis actores regionais entrevistados. O capítulo procurou perceber a opinião dos entrevistados sobre o potencial turístico do Norte de Portugal, bem como perceber como os principais documentos estratégicos para o sector do turismo no país abordam o turismo e o *place branding*. Foram entrevistadas as entidades: (i) Turismo do Porto e Norte de Portugal; e (ii) a Comissão de Coordenação e Desenvolvimento Regional do Norte. Os resultados mostram que existe alguma desarticulação entre entidades, como por exemplo na definição de uma marca territorial para a região, bem como a inexistência de uma visão de longo prazo para o setor de turismo na região. A conjuntura económica e social actual, refletem a falta de organização territorial e a definição de trajectórias únicas para o desenvolvimento territorial e possíveis estratégias de *branding*. Em consonância com a opinião dos entrevistados, o turismo na região do Norte de Portugal desempenha um papel importante como gerador de emprego e rendimento.

O capítulo 7 segue a mesma abordagem de planeamento estratégico territorial para pensar estrategicamente sobre iniciativas de *place branding* entre regiões transfronteiriças. O estudo de caso concentra-se na região transfronteiriça composta pelas NUTS III Alto Minho, Cávado, Ave, Área Metropolitana do Porto, Alto Tâmega, Tâmega e Sousa, Douro e Terras de Trás-os-Montes da NUTS II do Norte de Portugal e as províncias da A Coruña, Lugo, Ourense e Pontevedra da comunidade autónoma da Galiza no noroeste de Espanha. Este capítulo 7 procurou lançar alguma evidência sobre a importância empírica de uma estratégia de *place branding* transfronteiriço capaz de incentivar o empreendedorismo, a criação de emprego, o comércio e o investimento. Os resultados mostram que a combinação dos domínios económicos estratégicos da Galiza e do Norte de Portugal

permitirão dar visibilidade à região como um todo. Uma potencial estratégia de *place branding* transfronteiriço poderá ainda contribuir para transmitir para Portugal, para Espanha e para o mundo uma visão mais coerente da Euro-região Galiza-Norte de Portugal bem como das suas potencialidades e elementos distintivos.

O argumento principal debatido nesta tese enaltece que o *place branding* deve ser entendido, ensinado e seguido na prática como um instrumento do planeamento estratégico territorial (como meio), para melhorar as condições socioeconómicas (o fim) de territórios, independentemente da escala geográfica de aplicação. Além disso, esta tese explora uma dimensão mais geográfica do fenómeno, transmitindo, assim, uma definição alternativa aquelas que entretanto dominam o debate de processos de *branding* de territórios. Apesar do detalhe dos capítulos, esta tese enumera ainda algumas questões não resolvidas dentro da literatura e prática do *place branding*.
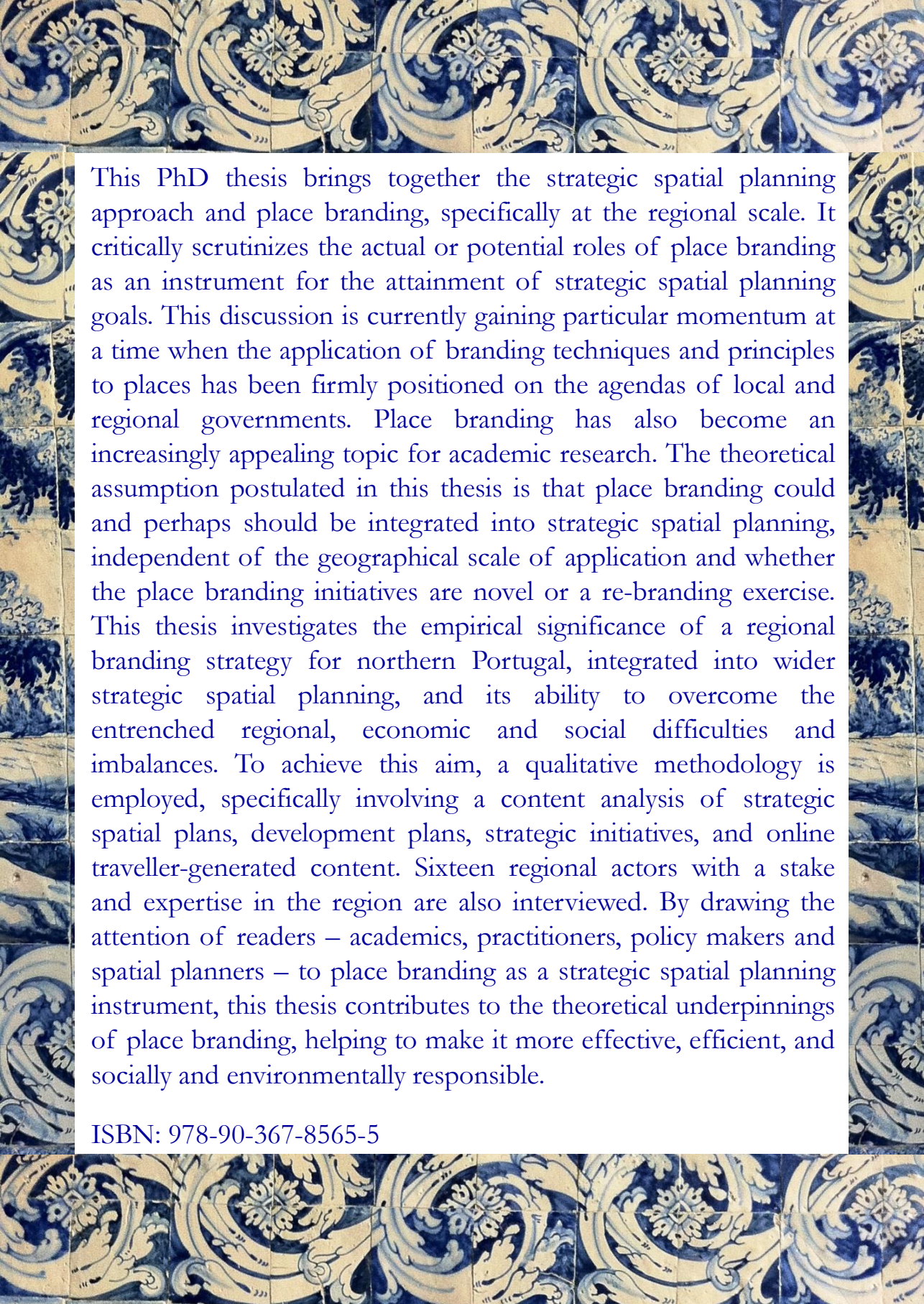
O capítulo 8 identifica seis necessidades para melhorar a eficácia da integração do *place branding* no planeamento estratégico territorial: (i) a necessidade de alinhar o *place branding* com as qualidades específicas de um território através de iniciativas feitas à medida e sensíveis/ajustadas ao contexto; (ii) a necessidade de alinhar o *place branding* com os planos de desenvolvimento territoriais e objectivos estratégicos do planeamento territorial, melhorando assim as condições desse território; (iii) a necessidade de adoptar um pensamento estratégico no *place branding*, permitindo, assim, a mudança estrutural e estratégica; (iv) a necessidade de seguir processos de co-produção em *place branding*, co-produzindo, assim, marcas territoriais colectivas (onde idealmente a participação cívica e institucional é elevada) dentro de uma lógica territorial também ela colectiva (portanto, uma estratégia colectiva de construção de marcas territoriais); (v) a necessidade de alinhar o *place branding* com o processo de previsão e criação de visões de futuro desejáveis, alinhando assim as expectativas que indivíduos têm no pensamento, com a realidade actual de um determinado território; e (vi) a necessidade de considerar o *place branding* como uma possível rota para revigorar a identidade de um território.

Depois uma reflexão cuidada das questões acima referidas, esta tese tenta promover um maior interesse no alinhamento de potenciais estratégias de *place branding* e estratégias de planeamento territorial mais amplas, bem como incentivar a continuidade da investigação para o estabelecimento de relações adicionais entre o *place branding* e o planeamento estratégico territorial. Esta pesquisa pode exortar as bases para um repensar do *place branding* como um fenómeno geográfico-territorial contribuindo assim para o robustecimento teórico e da prática deste fenómeno.

About the author

Eduardo Oliveira was born in Póvoa de Lanhoso, Braga district, northern Portugal. He studied Geography and Planning at the Department of Geography of the University of Minho, Guimarães, Portugal (2000-2004). Then, he completed a post-degree in Tourism and Regional Development at the Portuguese Catholic University, Braga, Portugal (2005-2006). He obtained his M.Sc. in Marketing and Strategic Management from the School of Economics and Management, University of Minho. Before completing his M.Sc. he spent six months as exchange student at the University Sains Malaysia, Penang, Malaysia. For some years he worked as research assistant at the Economic Policies Research Unit, School of Economics and Management, University of Minho (2006-2010). In 2012 he joined the Department of Spatial Planning and Environment, Faculty of Spatial Sciences, University of Groningen, the Netherlands as Ph.D. researcher, which he completed in 2015. On the basis of this thesis, he holds a Ph.D. from the University of Groningen. At the present, He works as postdoc researcher at the Swiss Federal Research Institute WSL, Birmensdorf, Zürich, Switzerland, on the CONCUR project - "From plans to land change: how strategic spatial planning contributes to the development of urban regions", where he continues researching strategic spatial planning and regional governance, under the supervision of Dr. Anna Hersperger.

This PhD thesis brings together the strategic spatial planning approach and place branding, specifically at the regional scale. It critically scrutinizes the actual or potential roles of place branding as an instrument for the attainment of strategic spatial planning goals. This discussion is currently gaining particular momentum at a time when the application of branding techniques and principles to places has been firmly positioned on the agendas of local and regional governments. Place branding has also become an increasingly appealing topic for academic research. The theoretical assumption postulated in this thesis is that place branding could and perhaps should be integrated into strategic spatial planning, independent of the geographical scale of application and whether the place branding initiatives are novel or a re-branding exercise. This thesis investigates the empirical significance of a regional branding strategy for northern Portugal, integrated into wider strategic spatial planning, and its ability to overcome the entrenched regional, economic and social difficulties and imbalances. To achieve this aim, a qualitative methodology is employed, specifically involving a content analysis of strategic spatial plans, development plans, strategic initiatives, and online traveller-generated content. Sixteen regional actors with a stake and expertise in the region are also interviewed. By drawing the attention of readers – academics, practitioners, policy makers and spatial planners – to place branding as a strategic spatial planning instrument, this thesis contributes to the theoretical underpinnings of place branding, helping to make it more effective, efficient, and socially and environmentally responsible.